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Before the

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND

Tuesday March 1, 2016

Washington, D.C.

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6 U.S. Senate

7 Committee on Armed Services

8 Washington, D.C.

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10 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in
11 Room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John
12 McCain, chairman of the committee, presiding.

13 Committee Members Present: Senators McCain
14 [presiding], Inhofe, Sessions, Wicker, Ayotte, Fischer,
15 Cotton, Rounds, Ernst, Tillis, Sullivan, Lee, Graham, Reed,
16 Nelson, Manchin, Shaheen, Gillibrand, Blumenthal, Donnelly,
17 Hirono, Kaine, King, and Heinrich.

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1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN McCAIN, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM ARIZONA

3 Chairman McCain: Good morning.

4 The Senate Armed Services Committee meets this morning
5 to receive testimony on the security situation in Europe and
6 the posture of the United States European Command. We are
7 pleased to welcome back General Philip Breedlove, the
8 Commander of the United States European Command and Supreme
9 Allied Commander, Europe.

10 General, this may be your last appearance before this
11 committee. I hope not. So I want to take this opportunity
12 to thank you for your decades of distinguished service to
13 our country. Probably most distinguished was your tour of
14 duty in Arizona, but anyway, I am very grateful for your
15 candor in alerting Americans and Europeans alike to the
16 threat posed by Russia, which is growing significantly
17 worse. Unfortunately, you have sometimes been a lonely
18 voice, but you have always been an impactful voice. This
19 committee relies upon the candor of our Nation's senior
20 military commanders. I believe your colleagues, as well as
21 your successor, should profit from the example of your
22 leadership. We certainly have.

23 I would like to welcome your wife Cindy, a proud
24 graduate of Arizona State University. She has been a strong
25 advocate for Air Force and military families, especially

1 concerning education. We are grateful to her and your three
2 children for the sacrifices they have made over your many
3 years of service.

4 To the surprise of no one on this committee, it only
5 took until the second day of the so-called ceasefire in
6 Syria before Vladimir Putin resumed his airstrikes in
7 support of the murderous Assad regime. I am sure Russia
8 will say it has only targeted "terrorists." And while the
9 administration and many others will likely express their
10 "concerns," I am sure they will preserve the agreement,
11 regardless of the price to U.S. credibility and the cost to
12 our partners on the ground.

13 All of this comes as no surprise. We know why Mr.
14 Putin agreed to a cessation of hostilities when he did. And
15 it is no accident that he violated that agreement when he
16 did. This is the same movie we have been watching in
17 Ukraine for 2 years: Russia presses its advantage
18 militarily, creates new facts on the ground, uses the denial
19 and delivery of humanitarian aid as a bargaining chip,
20 negotiates an agreement to lock in the spoils of war, and
21 then chooses when and where to resume fighting. This is
22 diplomacy in the service of military aggression. And it is
23 working because we are letting it.

24 In Ukraine and now in Syria, Putin has been learning
25 that military adventurism pays. The only deterrence that we

1 seem to be establishing is over ourselves. Indeed, 2 years
2 after Russia invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea, the
3 administration has still not provided Ukrainian forces with
4 the lethal assistance they need to defend themselves and
5 which the Congress has authorized.

6 And now we may be starting the cycle once again. In
7 recent weeks, fighting in eastern Ukraine has intensified.
8 Russian shelling and small-scale skirmishes have increased.
9 Russian tanks have been moving to support the separatists,
10 and Russian forces conducted a snap military exercise near
11 Ukraine and the Caucasus in February. The ceasefire in
12 Ukraine, which was coordinated to begin precisely as Russia
13 readied its intervention in Syria, now appears increasingly
14 tenuous. And, of course, Russia still has not lived up to
15 its obligations under the so-called Minsk II agreement. But
16 with the fighting in Syria capturing the headlines, Putin
17 has succeeded in diverting international attention from his
18 invasion of Ukraine.

19 It is not that the United States and NATO have done
20 nothing to respond to the challenge posed by Russia. It is
21 that none of the actions we have taken thus far are adequate
22 to the scope, scale, and seriousness of the challenges
23 Russia presents to our national security and to the
24 international order.

25 Ultimately, the reason for maintaining a strong U.S.

1 military presence in Europe is the same as it ever was: to
2 deter conflict and prevent aggression. But we must revisit
3 the question of what it will take to achieve this goal when
4 confronting a revisionist Russia that is undergoing
5 significant military modernization and that is willing to
6 use force not as a last resort, but as a primary tool to
7 achieve its neo-imperial objectives.

8 In short, the United States and NATO need to prepare
9 ourselves to deter and, if necessary, defeat Russian
10 aggression whether it is in the nuclear, conventional, or
11 hybrid domain.

12 Vladimir Putin views nuclear weapons as an integral
13 part of his strategy to reestablish Russian dominance in the
14 former Soviet Union. To increase the credibility of NATO's
15 nuclear deterrent, we must continue the ongoing
16 modernization of U.S. nuclear forces and ensure that NATO's
17 nuclear deterrent forces are survivable, well-exercised, and
18 increasingly ready to counter Russian nuclear doctrine,
19 which calls for the first use of nuclear weapons.

20 As General Breedlove has pointed out, the current U.S.
21 force structure in Europe and its underlying resourcing is
22 predicated on the mistaken policy of what he terms "hugging
23 the bear." But while some may try to argue otherwise, Putin
24 is not a security partner. General Breedlove, we look
25 forward to hearing what steps you think are required to

1 rectify our force posture and resource deficiency in light
2 of Russia's modernized conventional capabilities, especially
3 in its anti-access/area denial network from Kaliningrad to
4 Crimea to the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

5 In the realm of hybrid warfare, we are unfortunately
6 playing catch-up. In areas such as information operations
7 and cyber warfare, we have been bested by Putin's propaganda
8 machine and his army of trolls and hackers. Again, under
9 the misguided premise that Russia is a partner, we have let
10 our intelligence on Russia's tactical and operational
11 capabilities languish. This has made countering "hybrid"
12 tactics through effective attribution all the more
13 difficult.

14 Finally, as we consider all of these important issues,
15 it is important that we never forget the nature of the
16 regime that threatens our security and the peace of Europe.

17 This weekend marks the 1-year anniversary of the murder
18 of Boris Nemtsov on a bridge in the shadow of the Kremlin.
19 Boris was a friend to many of us. He was a Russian patriot
20 who had the courage to tell the truth about the
21 authoritarianism, rampant corruption, and imperial ambitions
22 that are endemic to Putin's regime. Boris gave his life to
23 tell these truths. We must honor his memory by resisting
24 Vladimir Putin's dark and dangerous view of the world and by
25 speaking up for the aspirations of so many Russians who

1 still long for a future of opportunity, rule of law, and
2 good relations with Europe and the United States.

3 That is what 30,000 Russians did this Sunday, marching
4 across Moscow in tribute to Boris chanting "Russia will be
5 free." That is our hope as well.

6 Senator Reed?

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. JACK REED, U.S. SENATOR FROM RHODE
2 ISLAND

3 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

4 Let me join you in welcoming General Breedlove. Again,
5 this could likely be your last hearing here. General, let
6 me thank you also for your extraordinary service to the Air Force
7 and to the Nation and to thank Cindy for her service and the
8 family. You have made us extraordinarily proud of all your
9 efforts. Thank you, sir.

10 The security landscape in your area of operations has
11 undergone fundamental changes on many fronts. To the east,
12 an aggressive Russia continues to violate international
13 convention in an attempt to fracture the post-Cold War
14 vision of a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace. To
15 the south, Europe faces multiple threats to stability,
16 including the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and North
17 Africa, the prospect of foreign terrorist fighters returning
18 to your area of operations, and the overwhelming influx of
19 refugees that shows little sign of abatement. And in the
20 far north, as the Arctic becomes increasingly accessible to
21 international shipping traffic, Russia has intensified their
22 military activity along the Northern Sea Route, in what may
23 be seen as an attempt to militarize a region that should
24 remain peaceful.

25 To address this multifaceted security situation, your

1 command recently released an updated EUCOM theater strategy.
2 The strategy characterizes Russia as the most prominent and
3 imminent security challenge, and it lists deterring Russian
4 aggression as the top priority. This is a significant
5 departure from past strategy documents. Despite these new
6 realities, the U.S. force posture in Europe is still sized
7 for a time when we viewed Russia through a much different
8 set of lenses.

9 The President's budget requests the European
10 Reassurance Initiative is designed to address this new
11 security paradigm. The ERI request would increase ongoing
12 efforts to reassure allies and partners and focus more
13 intently on deterrence measures. The predominant
14 expenditures are for prepositioning equipment in Central and
15 Eastern Europe and for the heel-to-toe rotational deployment
16 of an armored brigade combat team. However, this force
17 posture will only represent a fraction of the Cold War
18 presence. General, the committee will be interested to hear
19 your views on the appropriate size and shape of U.S. forces
20 in Europe to effectively carry out these assurance and
21 deterrence missions.

22 ERI also provides funds for increased and expanded
23 bilateral and multilateral exercises and additional efforts
24 to build partner capacity. The committee will be interested
25 to hear your views on how we can best assist our allies and

1 partners to be capable and credible forces. We would also
2 like to hear your views on what you believe these activities
3 will do to help incentivize NATO members to fulfill their
4 Wales commitment to achieve defense spending at 2 percent of
5 their GDP in the coming years.

6 In light of the hybrid warfare tactics used by Russia
7 in seizing Crimea and secretly supporting separatist forces
8 in the eastern Ukraine, it is critical that we have the
9 proper capabilities to provide indications and warnings of
10 Russian military activities. The committee will be
11 interested to hear your views regarding the capabilities you
12 need in order to provide early detection of Russian intents
13 and actions.

14 The Middle East conflicts and resultant refugee crisis
15 in Europe is something unseen since the founding of the
16 alliance. The security implications of the crisis are
17 enormous, threatening to unravel a vision of Europe that has
18 permeated the last 2 decades. While not specifically a
19 military challenge, the committee will be interested to hear
20 your views especially regarding the cooperation among allies
21 and partners in addressing this instability and stemming the
22 flow of foreign fighters that may be returning to Europe.

23 General Breedlove, again, thank you for your service.
24 We look forward to your testimony.

25 Chairman McCain: Welcome, General Breedlove.

1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL PHILIP M. BREEDLOVE, USAF,
2 COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND AND SUPREME ALLIED
3 COMMANDER, EUROPE

4 General Breedlove: Chairman McCain, Ranking Member
5 Reed, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for
6 the opportunity to testify before you today.

7 I have had no greater honor in my 39-year career than
8 to lead the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, coast
9 guardsmen, and civilians of the U.S. European Command.
10 These remarkable men and women serve not only in the
11 European theater but also in harm's way across the globe. I
12 thank this committee for your continued support to them and
13 their families.

14 Representing those families and with me this morning is
15 my wife Cindy. I would like to recognize her for her own 37
16 years of service.

17 I am also honored to serve alongside the men and women
18 in uniform of the nations of Europe. They are willing and
19 capable. They play an essential role in helping to protect
20 our own vital interests.

21 The last time I addressed this committee, the security
22 situation in Europe was complex. Since then, the situation
23 has only grown more serious and more complicated. Today
24 Europe faces security challenges from two directions.

25 First, to the east, Europe faces a resurgent,

1 aggressive Russia. Russia has chosen to be an adversary and
2 poses a long-term existential threat to the United States
3 and to our European allies and partners. Russia is eager to
4 exert unquestioned influence over its neighboring states in
5 its buffer zone. So Russia has used military force to
6 violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of
7 Ukraine, Georgia, and others like Moldova.

8 In Ukraine specifically, Russia continues to use all
9 elements of national power to hinder Kiev. We have recently
10 seen an increase in the level of violence along the line of
11 contact in the Donbass, as well as a number of diplomatic,
12 economic, and propaganda efforts to keep Ukraine from moving
13 closer to the West. The U.S. and other allies continue our
14 effort to assist the Ukrainians reform their military and
15 better train and develop Ukraine's service members. Russia
16 uses snap exercises to mask real deployments and to
17 desensitize us to that possibility. Russia has established
18 anti-access/area denial environments, as you have labeled
19 and I do as well, A2AD, in Kaliningrad, in the Black Sea,
20 and most recently in the eastern Mediterranean Sea and
21 western Syria, sharply constraining our access. Russia
22 seeks to reestablish a leading role on the world stage.

23 Russia does not just want to challenge the agreed rules
24 of international order, it wants to rewrite them. Russia
25 sees the U.S. and NATO as threats to its objectives and as

1 constraints on its aspirations. So Russia seeks to fracture
2 our unity and challenge our resolve. Russia recognizes
3 strength and sees weakness as opportunity.

4 To that end, Russia applies all instruments of national
5 power, including its military, to coerce, corrupt, and
6 undermine targeted European countries. Some call this
7 unconventional warfare. Some call it hybrid. In the end,
8 we see Russia using diplomatic, economic, and informational
9 tools, in addition to military pressure, to shape and
10 influence nations while trying to remain below triggering a
11 military response.

12 To the south, from the Levant through North Africa,
13 Europe faces the daunting challenge of mass migration
14 spurred by state instability and state collapse and masking
15 the movements of criminals, terrorists, and foreign
16 fighters. Within this mix, ISIL, or Daesh, is spreading
17 like a cancer, taking advantage of paths of least
18 resistance, threatening European nations and our own with
19 terrorist attacks. Its brutality is driving millions to
20 flee from Syria and Iraq, creating an almost unprecedented
21 humanitarian challenge.

22 Russia's entry into the fight in Syria has exacerbated
23 the problem, changing the dynamic in the air and on the
24 ground. Despite public pronouncements to the contrary,
25 Russia has done little to counter Daesh but had a great deal

1 to bolster the Assad regime and its allies. And together
2 Russia and the Assad regime are deliberately weaponizing
3 migration in an attempt to overwhelm European structures and
4 break European resolve.

5 All genuinely constructive efforts to end the war are
6 welcome, but actions must speak louder than words.

7 The war against Daesh hits home particularly hard for
8 our close NATO ally Turkey, which shares borders with Syria
9 and Iraq. Turkey faces its own internal threat from the PKK
10 and it views the Syrian Kurdish opposition group, the YPG,
11 as a close PKK affiliate. This prospect of YPG control of
12 Syrian territory all along the Turkish border is
13 unacceptable in Ankara. And further complicating the
14 picture, sharply divergent interests in Syria have created a
15 deep tension between Turkey and Russia. The risks of
16 miscalculation or even confirmation remains credible.

17 EUCOM is standing firm to meet this array of
18 challenges. To counter Russia, working with allies and
19 partners, we are deterring Russia now and preparing for
20 conflict, if necessary. That demonstrated preparedness to
21 defeat is an essential part of our deterrent message. In an
22 ideal world, as a core element of deterrence, we would
23 significantly bolster our permanent forward presence. In a
24 resource-constrained environment, we are aiming for the
25 appropriate mix of forward presence, prepositioned war

1 stocks ready to be used if needed, and the ability to
2 rapidly reinforce with troops coming from the continental
3 United States. This means making sure we can accomplish our
4 mission even when confronted with A2AD challenges.

5 To counter Daesh, EUCOM is actively facilitating
6 intelligence sharing and encouraging strong military
7 relationships across ministries and across borders. And to
8 meet all real and potential challenges, EUCOM is a central
9 part of U.S. leadership of the NATO alliance. As the
10 Alliance continues its adoption through the Warsaw Summit,
11 that includes increasing the readiness and responsiveness of
12 the entire NATO force structure, improving our indications
13 and warnings, or I&W, and sharpening our ability to make
14 decisions at speed.

15 This year's budget request reflects our solemn
16 commitment to the security of our allies and partners and to
17 protecting our homeland forward. EUCOM does not yet have
18 the personnel, equipment, and resources necessary to carry
19 out its growing mission, but the continuation of the
20 European Reassurance Initiative, or ERI, would strongly
21 support EUCOM's efforts to counter Russian aggression and
22 other threats by closing gaps in our posture and resourcing.
23 EUCOM has carefully planned and executed ERI funds you have
24 authorized over the past 2 years, and we are thankful for
25 those funds. And we have done this even as our headquarters

1 continues to shrink.

2 This year's budget request would significantly increase
3 ERI. That would let us deepen our investment in Europe
4 along five key lines of effort: providing more rotational
5 force, increasing training with our allies and partners,
6 increasing prepositioned warfighting equipment in theater,
7 increasing the capacities of our allies and partners, and
8 improving the requisite supporting infrastructure. Together
9 the tools ERI would provide would send a clear and visible
10 message to all audiences of our strong will and resolve.
11 Our further efforts to assure, deter, and defend supported
12 by ERI would complement those of the entire whole of
13 government team.

14 EUCOM remains committed to a shared vision of a Europe
15 while, free, at peace, and prosperous. As my military
16 career draws to an end, Chairman, I want to thank you again
17 for your unwavering support of the men and women of our
18 armed forces and the opportunities that you all have given
19 me to lead them. And I now look forward to your questions.

20 [The prepared statement of General Breedlove follows:]

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1 Chairman McCain: Thank you very much, General. I wish
2 that every American could have heard your testimony today.
3 Maybe we would have a presidential campaign that does not
4 focus on the size of people's ears and whether they sweat or
5 not. It is disturbing because I wish that every American
6 could hear your assessment of the situation and maybe we
7 would focus on some of these issues. So I thank you for a
8 very compelling testimony.

9 General, some of us have believed that the Russians are
10 using the refugee issue as a means to break up the European
11 Union. Do you share that view?

12 General Breedlove: Chairman, as you heard me describe,
13 I have used the term "weaponization" of immigration. I
14 cannot find any reason for the way Bashar al Assad has
15 prosecuted much of his campaign against his own people. As
16 a fighter pilot, I understand the ballistics of how you
17 deliver a weapon. There is no understandable method by
18 which you deliver a barrel bomb that reaches military
19 utility. Barrel bombs are designed to terrorize, get people
20 out of their homes, and get them on the road and make them
21 someone else's problem. These indiscriminate weapons used
22 by both Bashar al Assad and the non-precision use of weapons
23 by the Russian forces -- I cannot find any other reason for
24 them other than to cause refugees to be on the move and make
25 them someone else's problem.

1 Chairman McCain: Some of us also worry about the so-
2 called cessation is the Russians seeking the opportunity to
3 consolidate their gains, remove largely the modern
4 opposition from the area around Aleppo, and then consolidate
5 their gains, authenticated by the facts on the ground. I
6 wonder what your view of that is.

7 General Breedlove: Chairman, I would like to say up
8 front that any genuine effort to bring a peace that is
9 durable and meets the needs of the Syrian people would be
10 welcome I think for all of us. What we see, of course, as
11 you have described, is a cessation. We have not really seen
12 a change in the type of sorties being flown, et cetera, as
13 you described in your opening statement. We do understand
14 that the sorties are ostensibly being flown against Daesh
15 and al-Nusra and others, but I think that this remains to be
16 seen and we will have to watch the actual activity of the
17 cessation to determine whether it is a valid one or not.

18 Chairman McCain: In your ability to attempt to
19 predict, do you predict that the Russians will increase
20 their military activity in eastern Ukraine? And do you
21 support us supplying defensive weapons to the Ukrainians?

22 General Breedlove: Chairman, thank you for the
23 question.

24 I literally just hours ago got off the phone with our
25 ambassador in Ukraine to get his latest reading of what he

1 sees happening along the front because we get reporting
2 consistently that the number of attacks are up. In an
3 unclassified format, the reporting I see is in the last 24
4 hours, over 71 attacks, and in the last week, over 450
5 attacks along the line of contact. The report from the
6 ambassador is there are several disturbing trends in those
7 attacks, and that is that some of them are now happening in
8 places that were heretofore quiet, closer to Luhansk, and
9 also that the type and style of the attacks reflect the
10 weapons that were banned heretofore before, caliber size and
11 range.

12 I believe that Russia will dial up and down the
13 pressure along the line of contact to keep Kiev under
14 pressure to meet their part of the agreements first, which
15 as you know, are tough for Kiev to do. And so I do believe
16 that we will see Russia using the line of contact and the
17 activity on the line of contact to keep unhelpful pressure
18 on Kiev.

19 Chairman McCain: Finally, do you believe we should
20 provide defensive weapons?

21 General Breedlove: Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

22 I have said to you before and this committee before
23 that I believe that we should not take any tools off of the
24 plate as we address this problem. Russia is using all the
25 tools of a nation's power against Ukraine. We use that

1 simple model of DIME, diplomatic, informational, military,
2 and economic. And we see Russia bringing pressure in all of
3 those. And so in the military environment, I do not think
4 that any tool should be necessarily precluded, and I have
5 made my recommendations along those lines.

6 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

7 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

8 And thank you, General, for your excellent testimony.

9 I know when you were here last year, there was a real
10 concern that these separatist elements, actually Russian
11 surrogates, would either surge beyond the Minsk line and
12 indeed go for some major urban areas, particularly coastal
13 ports. Because of your activity and more importantly
14 because of the courage of Ukrainian forces, that has been
15 stopped. But as you point out, there is continued activity,
16 military activity.

17 But there seems to be, based on my trip last September,
18 a shift to political destabilization of the regime in Kiev.
19 And that requires not only a military response but also
20 reforms by the Ukrainian Government, support by the
21 international community. Can you talk about this other
22 dimension of the fight, which at this point might be more
23 critical? Your comments, please.

24 General Breedlove: Yes, sir. Thank you for that.

25 And in my conversation with the ambassador this

1 morning, I just would point out again in an unclassified
2 setting, that there appears to be some probing actually
3 going back and forth across the line now. But it is nothing
4 like major military muscle movements.

5 And clearly the path that you described is a very tough
6 one and a critical one for the Ukrainian Government. As we
7 all know, the current leaders of Ukraine were elected in a
8 reform environment, and their own people expect reform as a
9 part of their performance. As you, I think, correctly lay
10 out, what we see now is Russia bringing broad pressure on
11 that government to force problems in this change. And I
12 must say -- and I have said this before -- it is really hard
13 to do major change in your government when your nation is in
14 the field fighting for its existence. And so having to
15 effect these changes, while the military is defending
16 forward, is also tough. And I believe that by slowing and
17 discrediting the government, that there is a lot of pressure
18 by the people and encouraged by these actions that you
19 mentioned. And it is, I think, a very worrisome matter.

20 Senator Reed: Thank you.

21 Stepping back a bit in terms of the overall Russian
22 both strategy and capacity, I think the chairman once
23 famously described Russia as a gas station masquerading as a
24 country. And I do not think it has been said any better,
25 frankly. And we saw the initiation of a lot of these

1 activities when gas was roughly \$80-\$100 a barrel. It is
2 now \$20 to \$30 a barrel. It suggests long run or at least
3 raises the question long run if we can, through our actions,
4 keep prices at this low range, at what point might you see
5 the Russians either lack the capacity or have internal
6 problems that distract them from these efforts. Have you
7 seen any indications yet?

8 General Breedlove: Senator, I think that I am not an
9 economist, but I think I could talk to --

10 Senator Reed: That does not stop anyone here from
11 talking about the economy.

12 [Laughter.]

13 General Breedlove: I think clearly the combination of
14 sanctions, of the general economy, and the extremely
15 challenging gas prices for Russia has brought pressure on
16 them. And in the past, I have actually intimated that I did
17 not see it changing anything on the battlefield.

18 But I would tell you that now, Senator, I do see a few
19 changes, and I would like to just stop there. And I would
20 happy to have my staff discuss the particulars in a
21 classified environment.

22 Senator Reed: Fine, sir. Thank you for your answer.

23 Just a final point too. When we had a chance to meet,
24 you indicated as part of the area denial efforts of the
25 Russians are their extensive use of submarines. In fact, in

1 your command, you are only able to fill a fraction of the
2 requests that you make for U.S. submarine activity. If you
3 could share that information with us, I think it would help.

4 General Breedlove: Senator, thank you very much. And
5 I may actually just get up, if it is okay, and walk over to
6 the map just for a tiny moment.

7 Senator Reed: Yes.

8 General Breedlove: I will tell you what. I will just
9 sit here and do it from here.

10 Senator Reed: Why do you not have somebody to cover
11 the map? If the mountain will not go to the man, the man
12 shall go to the mountain, or vice versa.

13 [Laughter.]

14 General Breedlove: So, Senator, as you know, this is
15 an area that we sort of describe as the bastion, and this is
16 where Russia does all of its production testing and work of
17 its most sophisticated submarines. This is not classified
18 information. And then to get out into the world to be able
19 to employ those submarines, they have to come out through
20 this area over here that we call the GIUK gap. We love
21 acronyms. Greenland, Iceland, UK gap. So, Senator, at an
22 unclassified level, we are challenged to be able to watch
23 all this activity. And the Russians understand the utility
24 of submarines and have invested heavily in those submarines.
25 And that does challenge our abilities.

1 Senator Reed: Thank you very much, General.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman McCain: Senator Inhofe?

4 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 First of all, General Breedlove, let me join in the
6 conversation about your career, your contributions, what you
7 have done. If this ends up being the last one, I mean, you
8 can still come by and visit. Right?

9 General Breedlove: Yes, sir.

10 Senator Inhofe: Back when the continent of Africa was
11 in three different commands, I was one of them who felt that
12 we should have an AFRICOM. And so we have had it now for a
13 few years. And the problem was, as it was set up, it was
14 set up really without resources. So if something happens,
15 then they would depend upon you, upon EUCOM, to be able to
16 be resourced so they could deal with those problems. And
17 right now, I can name a lot of places in Africa that I
18 personally looked at and I could see problems coming,
19 Burundi, Eastern Congo, Zimbabwe, and several other areas on
20 both coasts where there have been oil findings and pirating
21 all of that.

22 Now, if that should happen, you have already stated in
23 your testimony -- you testified that you do not yet have the
24 personnel, equipment, or resources necessary to carry out
25 your own missions. What would you do if all of a sudden you

1 had to have those resources there and you do not have
2 adequate resources to carry out the mission as you see it
3 now?

4 General Breedlove: Senator, if you would allow me just
5 a moment of sharing a point of pride of mission, and that is
6 our EUCOM forces are, as you pointed out, all also available
7 to AFRICOM, and all of the forces that AFRICOM actually
8 have, we support in Europe in our basing, et cetera. And
9 our command takes great pride, when there is an Africa
10 mission, in being the very best support team commander to
11 Rod Rodriguez and our AFRICOM brothers and sisters that we
12 can.

13 So what I would say is we do have a full-time job
14 addressing the challenges that we see in the east, Russia;
15 in the south along Turkey's border where Russia also is, but
16 the problems down there. Our forces do have a full-time job
17 in those endeavors. And so when we do have to use our
18 forces to support AFRICOM -- and that is relatively often --
19 of course, that lowers our capacity to respond and also it
20 uses our forces' time when they are normally in what we call
21 dwell, remembering that all of EUCOM's forces are still in
22 the rotation like forces from America and other places to do
23 the missions in CENTCOM. So when our forces are home from
24 their CENTCOM rotations are when they are able to address
25 AFRICOM challenges. So we call that doing that mission in

1 our dwell or the time we are supposed to be recovering from
2 and training for our next rotations. And so it is a
3 challenge, but again, I would offer in a small moment of
4 pride to say that our EUCOM forces do a great job.

5 Senator Inhofe: Good. I was not implying that they
6 did not. I am just saying that if your resources really are
7 not adequate now and something like that could happen there
8 or the Balkans or someplace else, it would be a serious
9 problem.

10 We have talked about -- Senator Reed gave his gas
11 station characterization. And I think we all understand
12 that. You have actually written the European continued
13 dependency on Russian energy specifically for Soviet and
14 Eastern Bloc states only serves to bolster their -- and you
15 are right. You are exactly right on that.

16 Now, when we lifted our 40-year ban on exports, how do
17 you see that as rectifying this problem that we all know is
18 there?

19 General Breedlove: So, Senator, thank you. And again,
20 just to go back to that simple model, that D-I-M-E, the "E"
21 part -- and I can just use Ukraine as an example. In the
22 "E" part, Russia is very apt to use energy dependency and
23 energy capabilities as one of the tools, adjusting prices,
24 restricting flows, et cetera, et cetera. And so more
25 available energy sources I think would help to diffuse that

1 tool that they could use.

2 Senator Inhofe: And I appreciate that. My time has
3 just about expired, but I did want to remind you about our
4 conversation in my office. We talked about the -- I
5 happened to be over there at the time they had their
6 problem, its election. That is the first time in 96 years.
7 There is not one communist in their parliament. And yet,
8 both Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk are having other problems
9 right now. And you were asked about sending defensive
10 weapons over there, and you answered that question. But do
11 you see the fact that they have domestic problems there as
12 also contributing to the problem that we are having over
13 there?

14 General Breedlove: Yes, sir, I do in that I believe
15 that a lot of pressure is being brought on them from the
16 outside to continue this problem that they have to meet the
17 requirements of their people. And so these are definitely
18 pressures that are being used to exacerbate their attempt to
19 make the changes that they need to make.

20 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, General.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Blumenthal?

22 Senator Blumenthal: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I want to
23 join the chairman in thanking you for your excellent
24 testimony today and also for your service over many years
25 and your families as well.

1 You began to describe for Senator Reed some of the
2 threats posed in terms of undersea warfare capability by the
3 Russians, especially our apparent inability to fully track
4 their egress and activities in that area. And I wonder more
5 broadly whether you believe that our investment in undersea
6 warfare capability is sufficient. The President has
7 proposed \$5.2 billion in funding of Virginia class
8 submarines in his budget and \$1.9 million for the Ohio
9 replacement program. More broadly than just tracking
10 Russian submarines in your area of command, do you believe
11 that our investment in undersea warfare capability is
12 sufficient?

13 General Breedlove: Senator, I would rather not delve
14 into the service's budget because I do not know the
15 different things they are having to trade off and do inside
16 of their budget.

17 I would rather, if you would allow me to, speak to the
18 fact that submarines, like other assets, intelligence,
19 surveillance, and reconnaissance assets and other things,
20 are what we call low-density/high-demand, meaning that
21 typically the combatant commanders have more appetite than
22 there is supply. And I think it is a place where we have to
23 make tough resource allocations as a military.

24 And so I am sorry to not satisfy about particular
25 budget line items, but I would say that clearly we could use

1 more of these capabilities.

2 And one other thing that I would say as it relates to
3 submarines is as it relates to our Nation's nuclear
4 capability, I believe it is important to remain ready and
5 capable in that way.

6 Senator Blumenthal: A number of witnesses before this
7 committee from the Department of Defense have characterized
8 submarines as one of our chief asymmetric points of
9 dominance. You would agree, would you not?

10 General Breedlove: I think we have a magnificent
11 capability in our submarine force.

12 Senator Blumenthal: Turning back to the Ukraine, how
13 significant is the issue of corruption there in your view?

14 General Breedlove: Senator, this is something I think
15 that is a challenge in many places that we are dealing with
16 around the world. And I know that it has been a challenge
17 in Ukraine and I know that, if you read the papers, you see
18 that they are getting after this and it is causing some
19 disturbance among those who are officials and others in the
20 country. And I think that it is a challenge, and I see
21 that, as they try to address it, it does cause turmoil.

22 Senator Blumenthal: In the fiscal year 2016 NDAA,
23 Congress authorized \$300 million for the Ukraine Security
24 Assistance Initiative. \$50 million of that was intended for
25 lethal assistance, including anti-armor weapon systems,

1 mortars, crew-serve weapons, grenade launchers, and small
2 arms. Are you satisfied with the pace of provision and
3 delivery of those weapons?

4 General Breedlove: Sir, this year we have a group that
5 I think does a wonderful job, a multinational joint
6 commission, that goes into Ukraine and works with the
7 Ukrainian leadership, both uniformed and civilian leaders of
8 their military, and sits down, based on our military
9 expertise and those who we carry with us from our
10 ministries, to determine what we think in a broad sense is
11 what is needed for the Ukrainian military in the context of
12 these funds that you have graciously provided. That work
13 typically tracks very closely with what they ask us for when
14 they provide us their wishes.

15 And so I tell you that to say that we have this year
16 done our work and put together what I think is a
17 comprehensive set of capabilities that would answer broad
18 requirements because they are everything from communications
19 through lethal aid that they do need. And I have provided
20 my inputs to my leadership with both lethal and non-lethal
21 options, and I know that that is working through the process
22 now, sir.

23 Senator Blumenthal: So they are getting pretty much
24 everything they ask for? When you say they track their
25 requests, I understand that to mean that those requests are

1 met.

2 General Breedlove: They track closely with what the
3 Ukrainians typically provide when they provide lists to
4 visiting CODELs and others.

5 Senator Blumenthal: My time has expired. I thank you
6 very much.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 Chairman McCain: Senator Ayotte?

9 Senator Ayotte: Thank you, Chairman.

10 General Breedlove, I would like to thank you for your
11 excellent leadership and service to our country and your
12 family as well.

13 I would like to ask -- you have said I think on several
14 occasions before this committee today that you have
15 submitted your plans on your recommendations for both lethal
16 and non-lethal support to Ukraine. And I would like to ask
17 you how long ago did you submit those proposals to the
18 administration.

19 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I will get this exactly
20 wrong. It has been some weeks ago.

21 Senator Ayotte: Has it been over months?

22 General Breedlove: Can I get you that answer so I can
23 get it exactly right?

24 Senator Ayotte: Yes.

25 [The information follows:]

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1 Senator Ayotte: I mean, so here is my question. So
2 you have been before our committee before. You have talked
3 about the dire need in Ukraine. And we all know the
4 situation continues to escalate based on your testimony. Is
5 it fair to say, though, that you have already submitted your
6 recommendation? I know you are going to check on me, but we
7 are talking more than weeks. Are we not talking months
8 here?

9 General Breedlove: It could be, ma'am. I just need to
10 get it right.

11 Senator Ayotte: I think it is important for us to
12 understand this because you have not gotten an answer yet.
13 Have you?

14 General Breedlove: We have not seen the final result
15 of that --

16 Senator Ayotte: Well, here is the problem. There is a
17 real urgency here. We got an issue with Russia, and you
18 have made your recommendations. We admire your service.
19 You have said let us make sure we do not take any options
20 off the table. This committee, over a year ago plus, as a
21 whole on a bipartisan basis, said let us provide lethal
22 support so Ukrainians can defend themselves. And it has not
23 happened. You have not even gotten an answer.

24 So we look forward to hearing when you submitted this.
25 But I would call on the administration to support Ukraine

1 and to take up your recommendations and to act with some
2 urgency here on behalf of our friends, the Ukrainian people,
3 who we have seen Russia blow off the Budapest Memorandum and
4 we also see their aggression, and it is time for us to stand
5 with the people of Ukraine.

6 I would like to also ask you in the wake of the
7 November terrorist attack in Paris, to what degree do you
8 believe that ISIS will continue to attempt to infiltrate
9 their refugee flows.

10 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I think that they are doing
11 that today. I think that as you know, over a year, maybe
12 even as much as 2 years ago when we had refugee flows that
13 were not completely consistent but probably more legitimate
14 refugees fleeing nonresponsive governments, ungoverned
15 spaces, civil war, terrorism, what we have seen growing in
16 the past months and year is that in that flow of refugees,
17 we see criminality, terrorism, and foreign fighters. And I
18 know that does not sound like a distinction, but I see a
19 distinction in the latter two. And so this criminality, the
20 terrorists, and the returning foreign fighters are clearly a
21 daily part of the refugee flow now.

22 Senator Ayotte: So this is a real risk, obviously,
23 both to Europe and ourselves as we look at this refugee
24 issue and something that we need to be very careful about in
25 terms of screening and also making sure, especially with the

1 number of refugees flowing both into Europe and also some of
2 them coming here that we are very careful about this. Would
3 you agree with that?

4 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I think we need to be
5 careful about all flows of these refugees. Yes, ma'am.

6 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

7 I would like to ask what specific steps have we taken
8 in European Command to ensure that Moscow does not gain a
9 military advantage as a result of its development of ground-
10 launched cruise missiles in violation of the INF Treaty.
11 And this violation has been something that has been noted
12 many times in this committee over the last couple of years.

13 General Breedlove: Ma'am, thank you for that question.

14 I think you have heard actually in testimony before
15 this committee the Secretary of Defense's plan on how to
16 address that. At an unclassified level, he lays out four
17 steps, and that is what we are doing -- or five steps, and
18 that is what we are doing. Again, at a classified level, I
19 would love to have my staff get with yours over those steps.

20 Senator Ayotte: That would be helpful. What I have
21 not seen, though -- maybe I am missing it -- I have not seen
22 us really press Russia or call them out on this in a very
23 strenuous way. Am I missing something?

24 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I guess that is a question
25 of degree. We are calling them out, and the State

1 Department and others who deal with this in the treaty realm
2 are the first and primary voices now. And I would not want
3 to speak for their efforts at this point.

4 Senator Ayotte: Well, I look forward to also hearing
5 more in a classified setting about our response. But I
6 continue to remain concerned. Russia has essentially blown
7 off the INF Treaty, and what it means for, obviously, the
8 protection of us and our allies.

9 General Breedlove: Ma'am, we will have the staffs
10 connect so that the classified piece can be done.

11 Senator Ayotte: Thank you.

12 Chairman McCain: General, in response to Senator
13 Ayotte about terrorists in the flow of refugees, logic
14 compels us to assume the risk of attacks on the United
15 States of America or European countries is significantly
16 increased. Is that a conclusion you could draw?

17 General Breedlove: Chairman, I would take Daesh at
18 their word. They have stated that they intend to attack the
19 West, to include the United States, and I believe that they
20 will take the opportunities that they can to effect those
21 attacks.

22 Chairman McCain: And if they are in the flow of
23 refugees, the likelihood of attack is significantly
24 increased?

25 General Breedlove: I think we have to look at every

1 refugee flow with the eye towards this could be that source.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Manchin?

3 Senator Manchin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 First of all, General Breedlove, let me just tell you
5 that of all the professionals that appear before this
6 committee, I think yours is with anticipation and
7 appreciation more than any. And we have heard from
8 everybody. Trust me. So that speaks highly. And I would
9 hope that you would reconsider maybe your exiting a little
10 bit later than earlier.

11 With that being said, sir, this whole refugee thing is
12 a great concern to the State of West Virginia and my
13 constituents in my State. And I know that we are concerned.
14 And you have said that basically those people that are the
15 refugees sincerely that are migrating because of the danger
16 to them and their families -- there are terrorists. There
17 are foreign fighters and extremists entwined in that group
18 for the purpose of basically wreaking havoc on the rest of
19 Europe and the rest of the world, if they can.

20 Are the European officials as concerned as what we are
21 seeing? They are speaking out and that is why they are
22 cracking down more, you think?

23 General Breedlove: Senator, thank you. So the timing
24 of my exit -- my wife is sitting behind me, so I must be
25 very careful.

1 Senator Manchin: I was not sure if I saw you nudged or
2 get kicked or whatever. I am not sure.

3 General Breedlove: We all have bosses, and I have a
4 clear one.

5 [Laughter.]

6 General Breedlove: Sir, I do believe the Europeans
7 understand and are addressing this issue, especially --
8 well, all of the nations, but I would highlight that those
9 nations who have come under attack have shown us that this
10 is a problem and that the problem in one nation can quickly
11 go across a border into another nation. And so I do see all
12 of the things that you would expect of our nations as far as
13 we collaborate, include on intel sharing, policing
14 functions, and things to try --

15 Senator Manchin: Let me ask then does that lead back
16 into the thought process that there should be a secure no-
17 fly zone, something of that sort that NATO is going to
18 participate, all the countries that are concerned will
19 participate in that versus basically eliminating the
20 refugees who are really sincerely looking for some stability
21 and peace in their life.

22 General Breedlove: Senator, I have heard this concept
23 discussed in multiple forums. It was a large discussion at
24 this year's Munich Security Conference in several
25 discussions. So I do know that these are things that

1 Europeans are considering.

2 Senator Manchin: And as you know, politics sometimes
3 gets us entwined a little bit more than what we should be.

4 The whole refugee bill that we have been working on, trying
5 to basically make sure that these types of people that are
6 entrenched, the terrorists, foreign fighters, and other
7 extremists, is really the concerns of West Virginians.

8 Could they be coming to this country under the guise of
9 looking for some asylum, if we can do a better job on that
10 end before they get to this end?

11 General Breedlove: Senator, as I said, I think that
12 every refugee flow needs to be looked at with an eye towards
13 it could be taken advantage of by those who would seek to do
14 us harm.

15 Senator Manchin: So they are looking for every avenue
16 they can in order to get here or get wherever they can to
17 wreak havoc. That is known. I mean, the intelligence tells
18 us that. Correct?

19 General Breedlove: Yes, sir.

20 Senator Manchin: Sir, also as far as on the NATO
21 participation, 2 percent, are you seeing more of our NATO
22 allies stepping up to the plate, if you will?

23 General Breedlove: So, Senator, thank you for that
24 question, and it is worth discussing.

25 And the numbers that I will give you will be exactly

1 wrong from day to day, but they are approximate. Since
2 Wales, the nations have taken this seriously I think. The
3 numbers that we are using now, as we move through our last
4 ministerials, is that 16 of our nations have arrested the
5 decline in their budget. About five of our nations exceed 2
6 percent now, and about 7 percent -- my opinion, not an
7 official opinion of anyone's, but in my opinion there are
8 about seven of the nations which I think have very
9 creditable plans over a creditable amount of time to attempt
10 to get to 2 percent.

11 So still work to do. I do not want to overemphasize
12 this in a positive light, but what I do think this indicates
13 is a trend that the actions that our nations have seen in
14 Ukraine, the actions that our nations have seen on NATO's
15 southern border have affected a change in the approach to
16 these budgets.

17 And if I could, just one more thing, Senator. As
18 important to me as the 2 percent is the other modifier that
19 we talk about, which is 20 percent of that 2 percent should
20 be spent on recapitalization, bringing capabilities to our
21 military function. If the 2 percent is all personnel costs,
22 that does not sustain capability over time. So the 2
23 percent investment in recap is also important -- or the 20
24 percent investment in recap is also important.

25 Senator Manchin: My time is running out, sir.

1 I would like to say this. You know, the concerns that
2 people have -- and I think if you watch television at all
3 and the anger that you are seeing in the American voters and
4 people that are participating in the political process --
5 very concerned about the United States of America carrying
6 the load for everybody. And NATO being able to maybe call
7 the shots and have so much influence and input, but expected
8 for America to protect the rest of the world. And that is
9 what you are seeing the pushback. People in my little
10 State, one of the most patriotic States in the Nation, is
11 concerned about why do we have to carry the heavy load. Why
12 cannot other people participate?

13 And what you had recommended -- can NATO fulfill that
14 they go down that mission road, or can they just pick and
15 choose and say, listen, we fulfilled our obligation, here is
16 our 2 percent?

17 General Breedlove: Senator, the policing function is
18 really the rest of NATO working on each other.

19 Senator Manchin: Thank you, sir. I appreciate very
20 much you being here.

21 Chairman McCain: Senator Fischer?

22 Senator Fischer: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 It is nice to see you again, General. And I too would
24 like to thank you for your many years of service to this
25 country. It is truly appreciated by the people of the

1 United States.

2 Last year, you spoke about the lack of ISR coverage in
3 the European theater. What percentage of your ISR
4 requirements are currently being fulfilled?

5 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I will get this number
6 exactly wrong again, but it is a very small percentage. I
7 think that is based on where we see where our larger ISR
8 enterprise is focused right now.

9 Senator Fischer: If you would have to guess, would you
10 say it is less than 5 percent? I know we heard from General
11 Kelly that it was about 5 percent for his combatant command.
12 My guess is it is quite a bit less.

13 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I would say it is definitely
14 below 10 percent.

15 Senator Fischer: Is that an improvement over last
16 year? Do you believe the assets are increasingly being
17 devoted to counter the ISIL fight?

18 General Breedlove: So, ma'am, it has increased
19 somewhat over last year. And again, in this forum, I cannot
20 speak to the specifics. But there are a few things that we
21 are doing different. But as you remember, ma'am, the
22 counter-ISIL fight is really a CENTCOM fight, and so those
23 assets are truly being allocated to CENTCOM for that rather
24 than EUCOM.

25 Now, what I do know is that once again we are proud to

1 be a good supporting commander. A good percentage of what
2 we are given in EUCOM to do ISR is actually being used along
3 the Turkish border. So it sort of supports both our EUCOM
4 requirements and CENTCOM requirements.

5 Senator Fischer: Correct. And I am referring to the
6 annual airborne ISR requirements.

7 General Breedlove: Yes, ma'am.

8 Senator Fischer: I believe you have also mentioned the
9 shortfalls in the numbers of analysts when it comes to
10 Russia and dealing with Russia. And do you still have gaps
11 in that area?

12 General Breedlove: The short answer, ma'am, is yes.
13 But there is good news here, and I would like to give credit
14 to the intel community. When we first started having our
15 issues in Crimea, I went to our two most senior leading
16 intel leaders. And when I sat down with them and talked
17 about where we were in the height of the Cold War, where we
18 were at the end of the Cold War, and where we are now with
19 Russian analysts, and it is a demonstrative difference.

20 And to the two directors' great credit, they created
21 what is called Bare Essentials, and we have turned around an
22 effort to begin to bring analysts back to the Russia
23 problem. Now, that is a good thing, but this will deliver
24 slowly over time. And so, yes, we still are challenged with
25 not only the analytical capacity, but the physical capacity

1 of being able to look at this problem.

2 But I want to say one more time to give credit to the
3 intel community for recognizing the problem and beginning to
4 turn around an approach.

5 Senator Fischer: And as we look at the effectiveness
6 of the ISR, it is not just the collecting of the
7 information. It is also the analyzing. I am happy to hear
8 that you believe that gap is starting to close a little bit.
9 And what can we do to help that process move a little
10 quicker?

11 General Breedlove: Ma'am, can I take advantage of that
12 question and maybe change the answer just a little bit and
13 explain to you what is really worrisome to me and what we
14 need to do in my opinion?

15 We need to develop what we call indications and
16 warnings so that we can be predictive of what our opponents
17 might do. Because we are primarily a U.S.-stationed force
18 and U.S. EUCOM forces forward are somewhat less, are smaller
19 than they were in the past, we need to be able to accurately
20 predict when we need to bring forces over to solve a problem
21 before it starts to deter it. And that is based on what we
22 call indications and warnings. Indications and warnings is
23 based on a solid understanding of the day-to-day
24 intelligence. We need to understand what is normal so that
25 we can see the spike out of normal that says, wait a minute,

1 we need to deploy the very high readiness joint task force
2 or we need to deploy elements of our rapid reaction
3 capabilities. So to develop that I&W, we need to first
4 establish a solid base and understanding, and that will take
5 more intel capability and ISR than we currently have
6 allocated.

7 Senator Fischer: And to what extent are we sharing
8 information with our NATO allies in order to help really
9 fill that gap as well? And how are they contributing?
10 First, how are we sharing with them?

11 General Breedlove: We are sharing with them, and they
12 are sharing with us. Now, talking to you a little bit as
13 the NATO Commander not the U.S. Commander, our intel
14 function called the NIFC, NATO Intelligence Fusion Center,
15 is where all the nations come in and put in their
16 intelligence. It is fused and then put back out as a NATO
17 product. And so we are all sharing into there to try to
18 establish that baseline of understanding that we need. And
19 so we are sharing with them. And as you know, our Nation
20 has some very good technical capabilities, and what our
21 friends bring to the table or others where they have great
22 on-the-ground capabilities that they share with us. And I
23 think we should stop there on that conversation.

24 Senator Fischer: Thank you, sir.

25 Chairman McCain: Senator King?

1 Senator King: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 A couple of specific questions, General. In your
3 testimony, you unequivocally state that you believe that we
4 should ratify the U.N. Law of the Sea Treaty. Do you
5 believe it is compromises our national security -- our
6 failure to do so is a compromise to our national security?

7 General Breedlove: Senator, I would not want to put a
8 price like that on it. I think what I would do is tell you
9 that military people have consistently supported the UNCLOS.
10 And if I could just use a simple vignette of what is
11 happening now in the Arctic, as we see the Arctic rim become
12 militarized, especially in a Russian context, and then as we
13 see just like I think a week, 10 days ago, 2 weeks ago now,
14 renewed different claims into the Arctic shelves --

15 Senator King: And we are not at the table where those
16 claims are being adjudicated.

17 General Breedlove: That is correct. That is where I
18 was headed, sir. Because we are not a member of the UNCLOS,
19 we do not have the standing at the table to address that.

20 Senator King: I think I have asked practically every
21 flag officer that has appeared before this committee that
22 question and gotten the same answer. I hope the Congress
23 will listen to the advice of our military commanders.

24 Last fall, I was in Iceland and was struck by the
25 strategic value of that country and toured the old Keflavik

1 air base. Should we be rethinking our decision to leave
2 that base and find some way of having a presence there? To
3 me, it is a giant unsinkable aircraft carrier right in one
4 of the most strategic lanes in the world. Your thoughts?

5 General Breedlove: So, Senator, as I used the map to
6 explain that GIUK gap, Greenland, Iceland, UK gap, our
7 ability to project intelligence, surveillance, and
8 reconnaissance and other capabilities from places like
9 Keflavik are very important to us. And we are already
10 renewing some of these conversations.

11 Senator King: I hope that will continue, particularly
12 since before the facilities either get reused or
13 deteriorate. It is a marvelous facility.

14 We talked about the Russian economy, and I have heard
15 various estimates if oil prices stay where they are, 18
16 months, 2 years, 3 years before there is a real collapse.
17 And I think you mentioned this or suggested it. I think
18 that is a moment of maximum danger. When Putin's popularity
19 -- my understanding -- is being maintained by his foreign
20 adventurism and to the extent that the domestic economy and
21 political situation tightens in the country, he is going to
22 be more likely to be adventurous. And I think that creates
23 some real risk for us. Would you concur?

24 General Breedlove: Sir, this is something that we talk
25 about a lot, and it is one of the scenarios that concerns

1 us. As the other elements of national power diminish due to
2 the economy and the military continues to be invested in
3 that, that dynamic is of concern.

4 Senator King: What do you make of his, I think,
5 unsettling discussions about nuclear weapons, particularly
6 along the NATO line, this idea of escalate to de-escalate?
7 It seems to me this is a change in doctrine that is really
8 disturbing and we should be thinking very seriously about
9 what the implications are.

10 General Breedlove: Sir, I am on record that I think
11 this is irresponsible discussion -- I actually called it
12 irresponsible talk.

13 Senator King: For them I hope.

14 General Breedlove: Yes, sir. That is correct. I am
15 sorry. I should clarify.

16 And it is not just Mr. Putin. As you know, it has been
17 a series of their officials from several levels of
18 ministries, to include the uniformed military, that the
19 nuclear weapon is considered a normal weapon in the normal
20 escalation or de-escalation matrix of resolving an issue.
21 And I have said more than once that I do not think that is
22 responsible talk by a nuclear power.

23 Senator King: Is NATO article 5 credible today? Does
24 Russia view NATO, particularly in the Baltic States, as a
25 credible responder?

1 General Breedlove: Sir, if I could, just a tiny bit of
2 background. I would actually, if I was talking about the
3 articles of the Atlantic Treaty, it would start with article
4 3. Article 3 essentially says, in my Georgia terms, defense
5 starts at home. In other words, our nations also have to be
6 focused on their own internal defense, and I think that I
7 would remark to you that that has taken a very good turn
8 since Wales and since Crimea.

9 Then article 4 is the next step I would talk about, and
10 that is where nations begin to talk about the challenges
11 that they see and that they might be facing a threat.

12 And then article 5, of course, is that collective
13 defense article. It is the one that is most talked about,
14 but I think the others are equally important.

15 And I do believe that Mr. Putin understands the
16 difference between a NATO border and a non-NATO border when
17 it comes to overt military --

18 Senator King: The Ukraine.

19 General Breedlove: Yes, sir.

20 But I do not think necessarily that those NATO borders
21 mean that other elements of power will not be used. I think
22 there is an incredible information/disinformation campaign
23 and other types of pressures like economic pressures and
24 energy, as was mentioned earlier, that are being brought on
25 some of our NATO partners and allies.

1 Senator King: A very important point. Thank you.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 Chairman McCain: Senator Rounds?

4 Senator Rounds: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 General, thank you for your service.

6 I would like to follow up a little bit with what
7 Senator King has touched on, and that is the escalate to de-
8 escalate approach. I noticed in your written testimony, you
9 talk about the missile defense in Europe and you have
10 identified four phases. The missile defenses that we talk
11 about here -- what are they designed to protect against?

12 General Breedlove: So the current EPAA, European Phase
13 Adaptive Approach, is our American contribution to overall
14 European missile defense. And the essential elements of
15 that are, as you know, four cruisers -- or not cruisers --
16 sorry -- let us be precise -- four destroyers that have been
17 delivered to Rota with the Aegis system and then to build
18 two remote Aegis Ashore sites, one in Romania and one in
19 Poland, and then to couple those with a TPY-2 radar, which
20 we have placed in Turkey. And so the first elements of that
21 are all in place, the four destroyers, the TPY-2 in Turkey,
22 and the first -- we have just taken delivery of and working
23 towards IOC, initial operating capability, at our site at
24 Deveselu in Romania. And then following, we are now on
25 time, on schedule as we begin the process of the Polish

1 site. And these are aimed at the threat that we see from
2 the Middle East and Iran and others in their missile
3 capabilities in order to defend Europe.

4 Senator Rounds: So these would be defensive weapons
5 for both tactical or non-nuclear, as well as nuclear
6 weapons?

7 General Breedlove: Sir, they would defend against any
8 missile because we would not really know. We might have a
9 good guess, but we would not really know what kind of
10 missile it is. So these ballistic missiles emanating out of
11 the areas we are concerned about.

12 Senator Rounds: I noticed that when we talk about our
13 activity and our nuclear deterrence and weapons of mass
14 destruction with regard to our capabilities, you are very
15 specific in your statements talking about them in terms of
16 strategic nuclear forces. I would suspect it is in regard
17 to strategic versus tactical.

18 Would you think that the Russians at this point view
19 the same approach in terms of strategic versus tactical when
20 we talk about nuclear weapons and the possible deployment of
21 them?

22 General Breedlove: That is an excellent question that
23 I have not really thought much about, and I will explain
24 why. I actually look at the problem in a different way, and
25 it was mentioned before. And that is that if you read the

1 open writings, completely unclassified writings, of Mr.
2 Gerasimov, all the way up in their organizations, the
3 Russians talk about -- I would not use the word "routine,"
4 but talk about nuclear weapons being a part of that weapons
5 continuum that could be used and is envisioned to be used in
6 order to solve a conflict.

7 And so to answer your specific question, I would do it
8 in this way. I think that they see nuclear weapons as a
9 part of a solution if they need it, and so they do not draw
10 nearly the strong distinctions that you might be describing
11 as it relates to tactical versus strategic.

12 Senator Rounds: So if you were to compare our approach
13 with regard to nuclear weapons, we are still in a position
14 of looking at them as strategic in nature, whereas at the
15 same time, it is very possible that Russia may very well
16 look at them as a tactical weapon. And my question is, are
17 we prepared to respond in the case that that is their actual
18 long-term approach? And do we need to reevaluate our
19 capabilities if that is their approach?

20 General Breedlove: Senator, I will not dodge your
21 question. I just do not think that is appropriate for this
22 forum. If I could invite my staff to come sit down with
23 yours and we can give you pretty specific answers to those
24 questions.

25 Senator Rounds: Thank you.

1 I yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, sir.

2 Chairman McCain: Senator Hirono?

3 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 General, I also add my thanks to you for your service

5 and, of course, that of Mrs. Breedlove.

6 I wanted to just comment on your position regarding the
7 U.S. not joining in UNCLOS. And while you did not go so far
8 as to acknowledge that that is the threat to our national
9 security, it clearly disadvantages the United States in our
10 dealings in that part of the world. Correct?

11 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I am not trying to be
12 evasive. Just like other military individuals, I support
13 that we need the UNCLOS to be able to address issues that we
14 face today.

15 Senator Hirono: I agree with you.

16 In your written testimony, you mentioned the European
17 Phase Adaptive Approach, and you were asked briefly about
18 that just a little while ago and its capabilities to deepen
19 our missile defense partnerships with NATO. I know that we
20 have an initial operating capability in Romania and we are
21 on track to put another site in -- where is it?

22 General Breedlove: Poland, ma'am.

23 Senator Hirono: In Poland.

24 So what is Russia's reaction to our development of EPAA
25 sites?

1 General Breedlove: Ma'am, we need to be very
2 straightforward. Russia looks at this as a huge problem.
3 They talk about it all the time as being destabilizing, et
4 cetera. Russia believes that these sites challenge their
5 strategic nuclear capability, which they then believe
6 unbalances the nuclear balance with the United States.
7 Russia has been consistently opposed to EPAA in all shapes
8 and forms in Europe.

9 Senator Hirono: So in response, then has Russia done
10 anything because of the position that they have regarding
11 EPAA sites?

12 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I cannot tie any actions
13 directly. I would just offer the following. Russia
14 continues to aggressively recapitalize its nuclear
15 capability. It continues to invest in its strategic nuclear
16 forces. And as you have heard mentioned here, most of the
17 world believes they have abrogated the INF Treaty in
18 developing tactical nuclear weapons that are outside of what
19 the INF was described for. I cannot tie any of that
20 directly to EPAA, ma'am, and I would not want you to take
21 that inference. But what I would say is that Russia sees
22 the need and value for having a diverse and capable nuclear
23 force, and they continue to invest in it.

24 Senator Hirono: Thank you.

25 You also mentioned that the 2012 Defense Strategic

1 Guidance that outlined our rebalance to the Asia-Pacific was
2 determined at a time when we thought Russia was a partner
3 and not a threat. Now that Russia is deemed one of our
4 primary threats, what are the implications to that regarding
5 the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific? And can you also talk
6 about some of the challenges of being able to maintain our
7 interests in the Asia-Pacific while also effectively trying
8 to limit Russian aggressive behavior?

9 General Breedlove: Ma'am, what I would rather not do
10 and what I have refrained from for most of my military
11 career is what we call shooting on someone else's target.
12 So I would not like to address my concerns based on
13 something that is happening in the Pacific Command.

14 I would just tell you that we do see, as you have
15 described, that we have been in a period for 2 decades of
16 trying to make a partner out of Russia, and we have
17 approached our strategies, our force sizes, our headquarters
18 size capability and type. All the things in Europe have
19 been adjusted for almost 2 decades for that situation where
20 we would hope that we could go forward together with Russia
21 to create a Europe whole, free, at peace, and I personally
22 add prosperous.

23 But again, as you have said, what we have seen starting
24 probably in 2008, but certainly across the last 2 years is
25 we do not have a partner in Russia. And so we are now ill-

1 placed in Europe as far as our force sizing capability, our
2 headquarters sizing capability, and we are having to
3 readdress our planning and other things as well to readdress
4 this issue. And so I would advocate that that understanding
5 of what Russia now represents would require us to think
6 about how we allocate forces.

7 Senator Hirono: And I think the same goes for our
8 understanding of aggressive behavior from North Korea and
9 China with regard to the Asia-Pacific area.

10 So thank you for not pitting one area of the globe
11 against another.

12 General Breedlove: Yes, ma'am.

13 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Chairman McCain: Senator Ernst?

15 Senator Ernst: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16 General Breedlove, thank you very much for your years
17 of admirable service. I know I appreciate it. All the
18 members of this panel appreciate it, and of course, all of
19 the folks across the country appreciate it as well.

20 In your written testimony, you say the capabilities
21 available for EUCOM force protection are not keeping pace
22 with the number of at-risk locations and people and the
23 magnitude of the threats they face. You did state that
24 there is a growing mission and we are being stretched very
25 thin.

1 So as much as you can in this open setting, could you
2 provide us with greater insight into the risks you are
3 assuming due to a lack of force protection capabilities? I
4 know you touched upon military intelligence and maybe we
5 need a better understanding of its role in EUCOM. If you
6 could expand on that.

7 And then also, specifically what sort of capabilities
8 do you need to enhance force protection in Europe not only
9 for our service members, but for those families that are
10 stationed there as well?

11 General Breedlove: Ma'am, if you could allow me to hit
12 some generalities.

13 Senator Ernst: Absolutely.

14 General Breedlove: And again, I would offer my staff
15 to come speak specifics to you. I do not think they would
16 be appropriate here to talk about our vulnerabilities --

17 Senator Ernst: Yes, thank you.

18 General Breedlove: -- so that our opponents could hear
19 those.

20 But let me assure you first and foremost that the force
21 protection of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and
22 their families and those who support us like civilian
23 entities like Dods and other things out there, teachers and
24 others that are employed. These are a keen interest to us
25 as commanders, and we work this issue every day.

1 And to the point that you mentioned, which I think is
2 very salient for today's discussion, our ability to have the
3 authorities and the capabilities to share widely with our
4 partners and our allies is very important. And we do this
5 every day. And as you know, some of our relationships are
6 better than others, but part of our requirement is to
7 understand what is going on on the ground, and normally our
8 allies and partners know that better than we do. So key to
9 our ability is that ability to share these things that we
10 can bring to the table with the things they can bring to the
11 table to put together a holistic picture to be able then to
12 make the adjustments that we need to make. And I would tell
13 you that we are working that aggressively all the time.

14 And if I could, I would save the rest for a staff-to-
15 staff discussion.

16 Senator Ernst: Absolutely. It is imperative that we
17 do assume certain risks, but there are risks that you should
18 not have to assume. And so I would appreciate additional
19 feedback on that.

20 Sir, how will the Syrian ceasefire affect Russia's
21 intervention into Syria, and specifically what impact will
22 it have in your area of operations with respect to Russia's
23 activities in Ukraine, Crimea, Georgia, the Baltics, and of
24 course, elsewhere in Europe? And I know we have mentioned
25 the migrant flow. But if you could just visit a little bit

1 more about those specific areas, please.

2 General Breedlove: Ma'am, as I stated before, I think
3 it is important or at least I can say that any creditable
4 and real genuine approach to bringing a ceasefire that
5 respects and addresses the needs of the Syrian people I
6 think will be welcome and we would support that. What we
7 see in the mechanization of the ceasefire so far we need to
8 watch and see how it works. We see continuing activity that
9 is ostensibly aimed at the Daesh and al-Nusra and other
10 deemed terrorist fronts. So I think that the real effect of
11 what is happening now -- again, we support it if it is
12 genuine and authentic, but we need to watch it. I have said
13 before that the actions will speak louder than the words.
14 And we are really early now, and we need to see how those
15 actions bear out.

16 Senator Ernst: Great.

17 And I am running out of time, but very briefly a number
18 of these places that I just mentioned, Ukraine and so forth
19 -- we do have through the National Guard our State
20 partnership programs. Yes or no. Do you support those
21 programs?

22 General Breedlove: Ma'am, they really represent almost
23 24 percent of my outreach to other nations, and they are, in
24 some cases, our very best tool for developing partnership
25 capacity in our nations.

1 Senator Ernst: Thank you very much.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3 Chairman McCain: Senator Shaheen?

4 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 And, General Breedlove, I certainly share the sentiment
6 of everybody on this committee about appreciation for your
7 service to the country and your family's service to the
8 country, and that we will miss you. And I certainly hope
9 that once you take off your uniform and rejoin civilian
10 life, that you will continue to be involved in thinking
11 about how we should be responding to the challenges that we
12 face in Europe.

13 I want to go back to the testimony that you gave about
14 NATO and where we are with our NATO partners and building
15 their defense capabilities. And I wonder if you could talk
16 about what you hope to see coming out of the upcoming Warsaw
17 Summit.

18 General Breedlove: Yes, ma'am. Thank you for that.

19 So as we approach Warsaw, I have said more than once
20 and I sort of said it poorly in my opening statement that it
21 is really the road through Warsaw, not the road to Warsaw.
22 In other words, I believe that NATO will have to continue to
23 adapt across time.

24 What I believe is most important is that we continue
25 the regime of increasing the readiness and the

1 responsiveness of the entire NATO force structure. You saw
2 at Wales we made adaptation to the NRF and we built the very
3 high readiness joint task force. We increased the readiness
4 of all of the NRF-designated forces and their capabilities.

5 But that is not enough. We need to look and address
6 the entire force structure, and that is why the investment
7 regime that we talked about before is important, the overall
8 2 percent, but also inside of that 2 percent, the 20 percent
9 recapitalization investment. And I believe what would deter
10 Mr. Putin in the end game is if he looks at a NATO that is
11 more fit to purpose, more ready, more responsive, and a
12 strong transatlantic alliance with Canada and U.S. on the
13 other side of the Alliance. I think these are all very
14 important. I do see recognition of this in our NATO allies
15 and partners.

16 Senator Shaheen: There has been a lot of -- I do not
17 want to say "controversy" yet, but potential for controversy
18 over Great Britain's looking at exiting the EU and while
19 they would still be a member of NATO. Do you see a
20 referendum that would take Great Britain out of the EU as
21 having an impact on the security in Europe and the potential
22 for an impact on NATO?

23 General Breedlove: Ma'am, I struggle to be qualified
24 to make that judgment, and I am being very honest with you.
25 I would say this, that the UK remains a staunch part of

1 NATO, and there is no discussion either way about that. And
2 the UK is one of our great leaders in doing things that we
3 do inside of NATO, providing forces, providing leadership.
4 And they and five to six other nations are those very highly
5 technically capable nations that are incredibly important to
6 some of the exquisite missions that we have to do in NATO.
7 And so I remain completely confident in the UK as a
8 functioning, contributing, and leading partner in NATO.

9 Senator Shaheen: Thank you. I certainly hope that
10 that continues to be the case regardless of the outcome of
11 that referendum.

12 I wonder -- one of the things that NATO is working with
13 the EU on right now is the challenge of the migrants that
14 are coming into Europe. And they have agreed to undertake a
15 mission to help combat the criminal networks and the
16 traffickers that are bringing those migrants across the
17 Aegean from Turkey. Can you talk a little bit about how
18 this operation is expected to work and what we think the
19 chances for success are?

20 General Breedlove: Yes, ma'am. And another small
21 point of pride. The ministers asked us to do this at our
22 last ministerial, and the responsiveness of the NATO force
23 and the positioning and the way that we plan and use our
24 standing NATO maritime groups. We were able to respond
25 within 48 hours and have ships on station to begin the

1 mission because the mission is still evolving. My
2 headquarters and I have put out two directives to begin the
3 mission and now NATO is refining what it looks like.

4 But just very quickly, we are there to increase the
5 surveillance, monitoring, and view of what is going on on
6 the ocean, not to be a policing function, but to connect
7 then to the Turkish coast guard and the Greek coast guard
8 who are policing functions and hand off actionable
9 information so that they can bring the policing function.
10 So we are adding that capability to extend their eyes and
11 ears and do the point-out of problems so that they can do
12 the policing functions associated.

13 Of course, the NATO ships, if they observe bad things
14 on the ocean, they are still bound by the Law of the Sea,
15 and they will react appropriately. Turkey has agreed --
16 now, I know we are still doing some negotiations, but Turkey
17 has agreed in principle to receive any of these migrants
18 that are picked up by our NATO ships in this operation.

19 Senator Shaheen: So they would go to Turkey, not to
20 Greece.

21 General Breedlove: That is correct, ma'am. That is
22 the understanding today.

23 Senator Shaheen: Thank you very much. My time is up.

24 Chairman McCain: Senator Lee?

25 Senator Lee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Thank you, General Breedlove, for your service to our
2 country. Thanks for being here with us today.

3 I want to start just by reiterating a concern expressed
4 by my colleague, Senator Manchin. It worries me that the
5 U.S. accounts for about three-fourths of NATO funding even
6 though the European members have an even larger combined
7 economy and population, and that defense spending in
8 European countries has decreased by 28 percent since 1990.
9 Meanwhile, just over the last 12 years, Russia has increased
10 its defense budget by over 100 percent. And so this worries
11 me a little bit especially given that I think there are some
12 additional uncertainties that come into this in light of
13 President Obama's request to quadruple funding for the
14 European Reassurance Initiative in fiscal year 2017. It
15 worries me about, among other things, what this could say
16 about the willingness of our European allies to increase and
17 modernize their own defense systems.

18 But on that note, given the fact that he does want to
19 quadruple the funding for the European Reassurance
20 Initiative to \$3.4 billion, the Russian Government is
21 obviously not going to be taking this announcement happily.
22 And the objective of the spending is, of course, to reassure
23 our European allies that we are committed to their defense
24 and we are committed to doing what we can to try to deter
25 any further Russian aggression.

1 But I would like to ask you what are the chances that
2 this spending, this increased spending, might have the
3 opposite effect and that the Russian Government might use
4 increased spending levels in this area both as propaganda
5 and as sort of a public relations excuse to increase
6 Russia's own military buildup along its western border or
7 activity in Eastern Europe. And how are you addressing the
8 potential that we could, in one way or another, unwittingly,
9 unintentionally, be catalyzing an arms race on the Russian
10 border with Eastern Europe?

11 General Breedlove: So thank you. It is a complicated
12 question. If I could dissect it just a little bit to the
13 front end of the question about the concern of the
14 investment of our NATO nations.

15 Clearly we are focused on all of the nations addressing
16 their individual requirements. As we discussed earlier,
17 article 3 of the Atlantic Treaty is essentially, in my
18 words, defense begins at home. In other words, nations are
19 required to prepare for their own defense.

20 The numbers I use, sir, are probably exactly wrong.
21 They fluctuate a little bit. But here are the numbers that
22 are pretty widely accepted. Since Wales, 16 of our nations
23 have stopped their decline in defense spending. Five of the
24 nations at this moment are investing 2 percent or better.
25 And now, my personal opinion, not that of our government or

1 others, is there is about seven of the nations that I think
2 have a very creditable internal plan to reach 2 percent
3 within a creditable amount of time. At Wales, the decrease
4 in 10 years -- I think that a shorter time frame would be
5 more appropriate.

6 Senator Lee: 17 nations?

7 General Breedlove: Seven.

8 Senator Lee: Seven nations that would get there.

9 General Breedlove: So what we see -- and again, this
10 is not to be overly optimistic, but I am just reporting sort
11 of what we see now is that the nations have taken notice and
12 are beginning to address the issues.

13 To this latter half of your question, which is the
14 Russian reaction to ERI, everything we do in Europe the
15 Russians react to. Everything we do in Europe they use as a
16 part of their propaganda campaign. Every small exercise,
17 every big exercise, every investment, when we fly a couple
18 of bombers in an exercise, it gets big notice. And as you
19 have seen, they have a steady flow of aircraft into our
20 area.

21 So I do not want to belittle what you are concerned
22 about, the opposite effect in propaganda. Sir, they are
23 already talking about ERI in their propaganda efforts to
24 discredit what we are trying to do. And I would offer you
25 my opinion, which will sound a bit strident, but I believe

1 that Russia is on a path right now to recapitalize and
2 reinvest in its military, and it is moving forward in that
3 effort, and it will use things as an opportunity to label
4 them as a reaction. But I believe they are on a scheduled
5 plan and they are executing their approach to
6 recapitalization, reinvestment, reinvigorating, and probably
7 most disturbingly, to use their military as you have seen
8 them use it in Crimea, Donbass. They reset the line
9 recently and violated Georgian territory again by moving the
10 line about 1,600 meters south in South Ossetia to cover an
11 energy transmission point. And now you see what is going on
12 in Syria.

13 So, sir, I think they are on a schedule and they are
14 going to execute that schedule. They will use whatever they
15 can to address the propaganda piece to talk about it.

16 Senator Lee: Thank you very much, sir. I see my time
17 has expired.

18 Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

19 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

20 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you do
21 not mind, I was going to defer to Senator Kaine for the
22 moment and then go next.

23 Chairman McCain: I mind.

24 [Laughter.]

25 Senator Donnelly: Thank you.

1 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2 And thank you, General Breedlove. Again, I echo the
3 comments about your service. You have addressed most of my
4 questions.

5 But one area that we have spent a lot of time on in
6 this committee kind of at the edges of is the concern about
7 the Nation's cyber doctrine, sort of when is a cyber attack
8 an act of war, when it is sort of a lesser magnitude, what
9 should our response be. Do we have a deterrence doctrine?
10 If we do, do we publicize it? If we do not publicize it,
11 does it really deter?

12 But I am kind of curious about article 5 and collective
13 self-defense. If you could talk about NATO-level
14 discussions on when a cyber attack of a NATO ally would
15 potentially trigger an article 5 common defense obligation.

16 General Breedlove: Again, Senator, we would love to
17 offer some folks to come talk to you about in a
18 classified --

19 Senator Donnelly: Great.

20 General Breedlove: But there are things we can say
21 here, which I think are very pertinent to your question.

22 When I came to NATO about 3 years ago, NATO was in a
23 very nascent place as it relates to cyber activity and how
24 they would react to cyber. And I must tell you that in an
25 unqualified way that has changed. As you know, we have come

1 under cyber attack. We are under cyber attack every day.
2 And so the nations have very much understood that there are
3 28 doors into our Alliance, and if we have a few that are
4 massive and well-formed and a few that are wide open, we
5 have an issue. And so we have had a better understanding of
6 the collective requirement to address this challenge.

7 And I think I will stop there on that piece. What I
8 would offer to you is to have your MLA, maybe the next time
9 you are in Europe, take you through Tallinn, Estonia and see
10 the center of excellence there. It is an incredibly well
11 functioning place. It is putting out usable tools and
12 capabilities to our Alliance, and it is making a difference.
13 And you would be able to see a little bit firsthand if you
14 were to visit that in Tallinn.

15 Senator Kaine: I would love to do that, and I think
16 this is a topic the committee I am sure will be spending a
17 lot more time on generally, cyber doctrine.

18 The second thing. I am really interested in U.S.
19 activities to train the militaries of foreign nations, you
20 know, in terms of building up a NATO capacity. Certainly it
21 is the budgetary question but also the U.S. -- we do some of
22 our best work on the training side. And in particular,
23 since 2010, you have had a Black Sea rotational force, which
24 has been a Marine component attached to EUCOM, which has
25 some other responsibilities too, crisis response. But a lot

1 of their work has been training the militaries I guess
2 especially in the southeastern portion of the EUCOM
3 geography. Describe a little bit the utility of the Black
4 Sea rotational force in its 6 years of existence.

5 General Breedlove: So, Senator, if I could, I would
6 really like to open that up even a little bit bigger, and I
7 will just use the work that the 173rd Sky soldiers have just
8 finished up in Ukraine and handed off to another unit there.

9 I would tell you that your United States forces, all of
10 them, Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine, are doing some
11 incredible things training our allies and partners in
12 Europe. And the BSERV is an incredible example of that.
13 And the nations that the BSERV specifically works with, of
14 course, Romania, Bulgaria, are incredibly appreciative of
15 what they do, and they are benefiting because we see the
16 troops that they train serving alongside of us in
17 Afghanistan and other places, and they are capable and a lot
18 of times come with zero caveat and work and serve right
19 alongside our folks.

20 So let me just throw out a couple of other examples,
21 the Marine work and now beginning some of the Army work in
22 Georgia. Some of the finest soldiers that served with us in
23 Afghanistan and Kosovo and other places come from Georgia.
24 At one point, Georgia was --

25 Senator Kaine: I think they are in the Kurdish region

1 in northern Iraq as well.

2 General Breedlove: Yes, sir. They are serving
3 alongside our NATO partners and allies in many, many places.

4 And as I mentioned, we have just finished a very
5 successful series of training opportunities in Yavoriv in
6 Ukraine where we have trained the national guard forces, not
7 exactly similar to our National Guard forces but we have
8 just finished that iteration. And now we are beginning to
9 train the ministry of defense forces in Yavoriv, and this is
10 an incredibly successful program and the forces that we have
11 been training have been doing very well as they then move
12 forward.

13 And I know you are aware as well, sir, we have just
14 finished our first iteration of training Ukrainian SOF, and
15 we are just starting the second class. Again, I just spoke
16 to the ambassador now about 4 hours ago about some of the
17 things going on in Ukraine, and he is very complimentary of
18 both the work at Yavoriv and the work with the SOF.

19 So there are multiple examples, Georgia, Romania,
20 Ukraine, BSERV. These are all very successful and our
21 allies and partners are producing soldiers, sailors, airmen,
22 and marines who are serving alongside us in some tough,
23 tough places.

24 Senator Kaine: Thank you.

25 General Breedlove: I hope I was encouraging there

1 because this is a good news story.

2 Senator Kaine: I think it is a small portion of the
3 DOD budget that we devote to training foreign militaries
4 whether it is overseas or bringing foreign military leaders
5 here. But in terms of bang for the buck, it is one of the
6 best expenses we make. Thank you, General.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 Chairman McCain: Senator Graham? Oh, I am sorry.

9 Senator Cotton. I am sorry.

10 Senator Cotton: Thank you.

11 General, thank you very much for your many years of
12 service to our country.

13 I want to return to something to which you alluded
14 briefly in your testimony here and before the House Armed
15 Services Committee and about which the chairman asked you.
16 You said that Vladimir Putin is weaponizing immigration in
17 Syria. Could you explain a little bit more what you mean by
18 that concept?

19 General Breedlove: Senator, thank you for the
20 question.

21 I think I have to step back a little bit in the
22 conflict to start first with Bashar al Assad because this
23 story builds from that point, and that is that what we have
24 seen is the Assad regime using weaponry that has almost zero
25 military utility. Again, as a fighter pilot, I understand

1 the ballistics of a weapon. I have delivered a lot of them
2 myself. And the ballistics of a barrel bomb does not lend
3 itself to military utility. What it lends itself to is
4 terrorizing populations, getting them on the move, getting
5 them on the road, and making them someone else's problem.
6 And what we have seen is that continue into this weekend,
7 that style of approach by the Assad regime.

8 And then I would also say is that what we see in our
9 Russian counterparts in Syria is the use of a lot of very
10 indiscriminate weapons, and the percentage of precision
11 weaponry used is very low. And it is hard to tell from what
12 they are doing on their targets what their real intent is.
13 But what we do see is that it is causing a lot of flow of
14 people out of the stricken areas, getting them on the road,
15 and getting them into someone else's hair. Our ally Turkey,
16 over 2 million that they are taking care of. In Jordan,
17 half of that. In Lebanon, a huge number. So what we have
18 seen is not only the flow into Europe and other places
19 caused by these efforts, but an intense flow into the
20 neighboring nations.

21 And so I have used that word. I use that because I
22 cannot see the military utility of some of the actions being
23 taken by these individuals in the conflict.

24 Senator Cotton: Most of these migrants and refugees
25 are Sunni Arabs from Syria?

1 General Breedlove: I cannot say that because we do see
2 a pretty large migration flow still from Afghanistan and
3 other places.

4 Senator Cotton: But from Syria.

5 General Breedlove: From Syria, I do not want to hazard
6 a guess there, sir. I will get you an answer to that.

7 [The information follows:]

8 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Cotton: But while there not be military
2 application, it would be a convenient political development
3 if Bashar al Assad, who represents a minority sect in Syria,
4 were to ethnically cleanse much of his country of Sunni
5 Arabs, which have been a historic source of resistance to
6 Israel, destabilizing Jordan and Turkey, two key U.S. allies
7 on its border, as well as destabilizing much of Europe and
8 the Balkans and Eastern and Central Europe.

9 General Breedlove: Yes, sir.

10 Senator Cotton: Is it a long-term goal of Vladimir
11 Putin to ultimately divide the European Union and NATO?

12 General Breedlove: Sir, I said that in my written
13 testimony, and I think I actually said it in my opening
14 statement as well. I do believe that one of the primary
15 goals of Mr. Putin is to find a division in NATO and find a
16 division in the European Union.

17 Senator Cotton: And we often speculate about the
18 possibility of hybrid warfare, as it is called, in one of
19 the Baltic countries, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. That
20 would be a very high risk maneuver if you are thinking about
21 it from Vladimir Putin's standpoint. Right?

22 General Breedlove: So I believe Mr. Putin, as I said,
23 does understand article 5 and understands what a NATO border
24 is as it relates to conventional force. But I do not
25 believe that he feels necessarily restrained in using the

1 other tools of national power, diplomatic, informational,
2 economic in these areas.

3 Senator Cotton: If you look at the political
4 controversy that this flow of migrants and refugees has
5 created over this last year in Europe, from Vladimir Putin's
6 standpoint, it might appear that this is a much lower risk
7 way to divide Europe against itself than that kind of risk
8 of invading a NATO country. Correct?

9 General Breedlove: Sir, I cannot make that judgment
10 for Mr. Putin, but what we have seen is that this is
11 bringing great pressure on the nations of Europe.

12 Senator Cotton: What do you think is going to happen
13 as winter turns to spring and we see more migrants and
14 refugees? Just in the last week to 10 days, we have seen
15 the Visegrad countries meet with the Balkans excluding
16 Greece from this meeting and discussions about shutting the
17 Macedonian-Greek border, and therefore cutting off the land
18 bridge for refugees and migrants going into Austria and
19 Germany. Yet, Chancellor Merkel has just said that she
20 remains committed to keeping her borders entirely open.
21 What is the end game here for Europe?

22 General Breedlove: Sir, first to the first part of
23 your question, I was just in the Balkans the last -- about 2
24 weeks ago visiting everyone from Montenegro to Serbia
25 actually. On all of their minds is the concern of what

1 happens in the spring. Also, what happens in the dynamics
2 if some nations close borders and others do not. It could
3 shift the pattern through nations that are even less capable
4 of addressing these flows. And so this remains a big
5 concern for the nations of the area.

6 Senator Cotton: Thank you, General. My time has
7 expired. But I do think it is always important to remember
8 that as troublesome as these flows of migrants and refugees
9 are, it is merely a symptom, and the ultimate disease is the
10 Syrian civil war. And the U.S. administration bears
11 responsibility for that disease.

12 Chairman McCain: Senator Donnelly?

13 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 And, General, thank you for all your service to our
15 country.

16 When you were here before, when you were kind enough to
17 appear before us, one of the subjects we talked about was
18 Russian incursions into areas that they traditionally have
19 not been, Russia's being intercepted along Great Britain's
20 south coast, and that in order to avoid conflict, rather
21 than going head on with them, sometimes we have worked them
22 out, but they have not gone into greater conflict with them.

23 Is this continuing apace as great a rate as it was
24 before? And how long do you think this will continue, and
25 what message does it send to Putin that he can continue to

1 do these things?

2 General Breedlove: Sir, thank you. We did talk about
3 that, and yes we have seen the Russian Federation aircraft
4 in places that we have not seen them before, and that still
5 continues to today. But I need to be intellectually honest.
6 I would tell you that it has decreased a little bit. I
7 think that is primarily because there is a great focus right
8 now on Syria. Assets are dedicated to Syria, other things.
9 I am not sure that we would not see that go back up after a
10 Syrian conflict. It may just be a question of capacity and
11 focus, et cetera. So we need to be honest in our reporting
12 that it has dipped a little bit as we have seen Syria pick
13 up.

14 And I would just like to say -- I would not question
15 the words you use, but our responses to these things in
16 these unconventional places have not been that we yield but
17 we do what is professionally correct in those responses in
18 those spaces.

19 Senator Donnelly: What is your worst scenario in
20 regards to Russia? What are the things that, you know, when
21 you begin a day, you go this would be the worst case that
22 could happen?

23 General Breedlove: I would really love to do that in a
24 classified sense. I would tell you that we see a force that
25 is becoming more capable, more fully qualified. We see a

1 force that is being used routinely in ways that we have not
2 seen in years. I have been pretty straightforward about
3 that what we see now in Eastern Europe, that force is again
4 a tool used to change internationally recognized borders.
5 Russia continues to occupy the Ukrainian peninsula of
6 Crimea. Force was used to go across the international
7 border of Ukraine in the Donbass, and some of those forces
8 remain. And so my concern, sir, in an unclassified setting,
9 is that we see a force that is, once again, being used in
10 ways that we thought were over in Europe.

11 Senator Donnelly: It has appeared -- and I do not know
12 if this is the exact way to describe it, but it is almost as
13 if Putin in Russia has talked about their nuclear arsenal in
14 a fairly casual way. And when you look at this, what do you
15 think we should make of it? One of the things that has been
16 discussed is, as our conventional strike munitions and
17 conventional strike ability increases, they use this as an
18 effort to try to balance against it. But what is your view
19 of how fast and loose they actually are in this area?

20 General Breedlove: Sir, I have remarked more than once
21 publicly and in testimony that I think this is irresponsible
22 talk or irresponsible behavior, the way that nukes are
23 talked about and they are talked about from the relatively
24 junior military levels right up to the most senior members
25 of the Russian Federation leadership. And none of us in the

1 West believe that this is responsible behavior in the way
2 that nukes are discussed.

3 What do we do about it? First, we do not engage in
4 that kind of discussion. Second, I think what is really
5 important to me is that we retain a creditable, capable,
6 nuclear force, and that the world sees that force as being
7 creditable and capable.

8 And to your other question that our increasing
9 capabilities, as it relates to precision, conventional
10 attack and other things, this is one of the reasons that we
11 hear these discussions. If a situation is not going well,
12 the other side discusses that nukes could be used to
13 escalate, to de-escalate, et cetera. But I do not think
14 that we should dampen our ability to use our conventional
15 force in the way that we have used it in the past.

16 Senator Donnelly: Thank you. My time is up.

17 I just wanted to ask you do you think that Vladimir
18 Putin believes that article 5 would be enforced, that all of
19 the different members would come to the other member's
20 defense if he took action in one of the NATO countries.

21 General Breedlove: I believe he absolutely understands
22 what article 5 means in relation to a NATO boundary. And I
23 would say, Senator, that the nations of NATO at the Wales
24 Summit were very demonstrative, very quick about the
25 absolute commitment to article 5 collective defense.

1 Senator Donnelly: Thank you, and thank you so much for
2 your service to the country.

3 Chairman McCain: Senator Graham?

4 Senator Graham: Thank you, General. You have done a
5 really good job in your position here.

6 It is 2016. Is it fair to say that Russia had
7 successfully dismembered the Ukraine?

8 General Breedlove: Sir, I think that I am not sure I
9 would use those terms, but the way I would characterize it
10 is Russia is right now holding the levers to bring great
11 pressure and to adjust the way things happen in Kiev and by
12 fielding a force in the Donbass that will give him those
13 levers into the future.

14 Senator Graham: Well, if you do not like
15 "dismembered," what word would you use?

16 General Breedlove: Sir, I think he is now able to
17 exert great influence on what happens in Ukraine.

18 Senator Graham: To the Ukrainian people's detriment
19 and our detriment?

20 General Breedlove: Sir, I believe that the Ukrainian
21 people voted for a different agenda when they elected Mr.
22 Poroshenko and Mr. Yatsenyuk.

23 Senator Graham: So it is 2016. Do you agree with me
24 that Russia has intervened on the side of Assad in a
25 significant capacity?

1 General Breedlove: I do believe, Senator, and I have
2 said it before that I believe the main effort of the Russian
3 forces in Syria are to support the Assad regime.

4 Senator Graham: The Russians have been bombing people
5 we have trained in Syria. Is that correct?

6 General Breedlove: Yes, sir.

7 Senator Graham: Are the sanctions against Russia
8 working?

9 General Breedlove: Senator, I think that the
10 combination of economic pressure, the drop in the fuel
11 prices, and the sanctions that are on Russia -- the
12 combination of those have had effect.

13 Senator Graham: Are they working? Are they changing
14 Russian behavior?

15 General Breedlove: Some months ago or maybe even a
16 month or so ago, I would have answered no. I think today in
17 the classified sense I could come to you and say there are a
18 few things we are beginning to see happen.

19 Senator Graham: Well, I would like to have that
20 briefing because my answer would be no. I do not see them
21 changing in a positive way at all. Maybe you should do this
22 in a classified setting.

23 What are we not doing that we could do that would
24 change Russian behavior? Do you want to talk about that in
25 a classified setting?

1 General Breedlove: Sir, I would love to do that.

2 Senator Graham: Okay.

3 Let us talk about Turkey. Are you familiar with the

4 Syrian Defense Forces?

5 General Breedlove: I am, sir.

6 Senator Graham: What percentage of that force is

7 Kurdish?

8 General Breedlove: That question I simply do not know,

9 and I will have to get you an answer to that.

10 [The information follows:]

11 [COMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Graham: Is it fair to say that Turkey has a
2 problem with what we are doing inside of Syria with the
3 Kurds?

4 General Breedlove: Sir, I do believe that we have
5 disagreements with our great ally over some of the
6 approaches we take with the Kurdish forces in north Syria.

7 Senator Graham: Do you see any scenario where the
8 Syrian Defense Forces in their current construct could take
9 Raqqa away from ISIL?

10 General Breedlove: Sir, if I could ask you to ask that
11 of the CENTCOM commander, I think it would be a better place
12 to answer that.

13 Senator Graham: Okay.

14 From a NATO perspective, in terms of Afghanistan, do
15 you believe that NATO nations will follow whatever we do in
16 terms of troops in 2017?

17 General Breedlove: Sir, I do believe that the NATO
18 nations are willing to follow our lead. And actually I
19 cannot speak for those nations, but several have intimated
20 that they would stay, if required, to get the mission done.

21 Senator Graham: Would you recommend against going to
22 1,000 U.S. personnel in 2017 in Afghanistan, given what you
23 know about Afghanistan?

24 General Breedlove: Sir, what I have said is that I
25 believe that we need to accomplish the mission. We are

1 there now, doing now, and that until we see that mission
2 accomplished, I think we need to stay --

3 Senator Graham: Have we accomplished that mission?

4 General Breedlove: Not yet, sir.

5 Senator Graham: The counterterrorism is a mission that
6 we are trying to accomplish to stop an attack on the
7 homeland. Is that correct?

8 General Breedlove: Counterterrorism is an important
9 part of that. Yes, sir.

10 Senator Graham: During your time in the military, have
11 you seen more threats to America?

12 General Breedlove: Sir, I think that we are in one of
13 the toughest situations that we have faced in decades right
14 now.

15 Senator Graham: So do you think it is smart for
16 Congress, in light of what you just said, to reimpose
17 sequestration next year?

18 General Breedlove: Sir, allow me to speak to the
19 European Command and my mission. And I have said that
20 sequestration would be very tough on our ability to
21 accomplish our mission.

22 Senator Graham: Do you think it is the signal we want
23 to send to our NATO allies as we tell them to up their
24 spending and we cut ours?

25 General Breedlove: I think it is important for us to

1 lead, sir.

2 Senator Graham: What kind of signal would it send to
3 Russia?

4 General Breedlove: I think they are watching exactly
5 what we do with our modernization programs and our presence
6 programs and our employment overseas. And it is important
7 that we sustain the appropriate presence and capability
8 forward.

9 Senator Graham: Thank you for your service.

10 Chairman McCain: Senator Tillis?

11 Senator Tillis: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12 General, thank you for being here.

13 A quick question that is really to follow up on
14 questions that Senators Lee and Cotton touched on.

15 The divided West is a great threat for you in doing
16 your job. One of the things you mentioned that sanctions
17 seem to be having some effect. Do you believe that they are
18 prepared to renew those sanctions going into summer in your
19 discussion with our partners?

20 General Breedlove: Sir, I learned a long time ago as
21 the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO that I cannot speak for
22 the nations. So I would defer on that question. I think
23 that that would be much -- I would be on shaky ground as a
24 military man to speak to the political positions of the
25 nations. I am sorry to dodge your question, but that is a

1 realistic answer I think.

2 Senator Tillis: What is your personal recommendation?

3 Do you think that it is a tool that you hope that the
4 renewal of the sanctions go back into place? Rather than
5 speculate on the positions, are you an advocate for
6 continuing the renewal of the sanctions?

7 General Breedlove: I am, sir. The way I look at this
8 it is one of our tools. As I spoke about today, I think
9 that our opponents use all of the major tools of a nation's
10 power. We use a simple model called DIME, diplomatic,
11 informational, military, and economic. The economic piece
12 is what you are talking about. Our opponents use all of
13 those tools to bring great pressure on nations, and we
14 should not take any of those tools off of the table.

15 Senator Tillis: Thank you.

16 General, do you think that -- or could you talk a
17 little bit about the linkage of Putin's plans in Ukraine
18 with respect to Syria? Is there some sort of strategic
19 linkage there? Can you describe that if there is?

20 General Breedlove: Sir, yes. I do not think that Mr.
21 Putin nor the leaders of -- the small group of leaders of
22 the Russian Federation do anything in isolation. I think
23 all these things are connected. As I have answered other of
24 your colleagues today, I think that one of the major goals
25 -- or two of the major goals of Mr. Putin is to bring

1 dissolution to either NATO or to the European Union,
2 preferably both. If Mr. Putin can find a way to fracture
3 those alliances or organizations, it makes it much easier
4 for him to accomplish his larger goals in Europe at that
5 point. And so I do not think that any of these operations
6 of Mr. Putin from Syria to the Arctic are disassociated. I
7 believe they are all brought in a broad sense.

8 Senator Tillis: General, in your written testimony,
9 you have commented that our current force posture in Europe
10 has been based on Russia as a strategic partner. I think
11 you described it as hugging the bear. That is obviously not
12 working.

13 So what concrete steps do we need to take to change our
14 force posture in Europe to be able to deter Russia more
15 effectively?

16 General Breedlove: Thank you, sir.

17 So if I could just very briefly on NATO, I think that
18 what NATO needs to do I described earlier as bringing the
19 entire force of NATO to an increased readiness and
20 responsiveness. In Wales, we focused on the NRF, the VJTF,
21 and some of the smaller forces, and we are delivering that.
22 But now we need to bring focus across all of the force to
23 bring readiness and responsiveness up.

24 In a U.S. context, as I described in my opening
25 statement, I think it is sort of a three-step approach, and

1 it would take me about half a minute to lay that out.

2 First and foremost, our forward position forces are
3 incredibly important. And permanently forward stationed
4 forces are the optimum.

5 But understanding the environment that we are in, we
6 then look at two other steps to address forward presence.
7 One is that we will look at and are and a part of ERI is
8 prepositioning forward materials that we can rapidly fall in
9 on to rapidly increase our posture. And then the second
10 piece is those heel-to-toe, fully funded rotational forces
11 that use the prepositioning or come over to have presence
12 and exercises. So that is sort of the step two basket.

13 The step three basket is a little tougher to describe,
14 but in shorthand, it is we need to be able to rapidly
15 reinforce. That sounds very straightforward. It is not.
16 Remember that Russia has created a very dense pattern of
17 A2AD, anti-access/area denial. We need to be investing in
18 those capabilities and capacities that allow us to enter
19 into an A2AD environment and be able to reinforce, and then
20 some of the investments of the European Reassurance
21 Initiative are on the ground, such as improving railheads,
22 railroads, improving our ports, and our airfields again so
23 that once we puncture the A2AD, we can rapidly address our
24 issues.

25 So it is a three-step approach. Look at our forward-

1 stationed forces. Look at our rotating forces and
2 prepositioned materials, and then ensure that we can rapidly
3 reinforce. And that is the framework in which I am trying
4 to drive the conversation with my leadership.

5 Senator Tillis: Thank you, General.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan?

8 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9 And, General, I want to thank you again for your
10 service. I want to thank your wife. I know that you have
11 committed decades to serving our country. I think you have
12 done it in an outstanding manner, particularly your current
13 billet.

14 I want to follow up on Senator King's questions and in
15 some ways ask similar questions that Senator Graham did.

16 It is 2016. Do you think it is safe to say that Russia
17 has successfully militarized the Arctic?

18 General Breedlove: Sir, I do believe that we see a
19 pattern there that concerns many of our nations and
20 partners. As you know, we share the Arctic with our other
21 NATO ally Canada and then six other allies and partners of
22 NATO. Each are concerned with what they see happening in
23 the Arctic where we see the creation of intelligence and
24 surveillance capabilities, weaponization such as surface-to-
25 air missiles, coastal defense cruise missiles, et cetera, et

1 cetera.

2 Senator Sullivan: Four new BCTs, a new Arctic command,
3 13 new airfields.

4 General Breedlove: Yes, sir.

5 Senator Sullivan: So is it not safe to say that Russia
6 has successfully militarized the Arctic?

7 General Breedlove: They have certainly increased their
8 capability and capacity there.

9 Senator Sullivan: Can you describe a little bit -- and
10 you and I have talked about it, but really how massive the
11 last year the two different Arctic military exercises were?
12 These were huge. And maybe you cannot talk about it in this
13 setting, but I will ask the question anyway of whether or
14 not we were even aware that they were going to happen or
15 happening. When you move tens of thousands of troops and
16 hundreds of aircraft and dozens of ships, normally that is
17 something the United States military has an inkling about.
18 And it seems in this case, they did it and we were pretty
19 unaware. Can you talk about that a little bit?

20 General Breedlove: I would like to have my staff work
21 with yours on some more classified answers to fully flesh
22 this out. But what I would say is I agree with you that we
23 have seen some very demonstrative exercises, and in certain
24 ways, they did absolutely surprise us. One of the things
25 that surprised us is how one of those exercises then morphed

1 into a larger exercise in the western military district so
2 that we saw a very large what I would call strategically
3 focused exercise, not that an exercise in the Arctic alone
4 is not strategic, but we saw it morph into a bigger
5 exercise.

6 Senator Sullivan: And when Vladimir Putin does those
7 kind of things, as you mentioned before, that is not
8 normally -- there is usually something to that. Correct?

9 General Breedlove: Sir, as I said before, I think he
10 has taken a very strategic approach to everything he does.

11 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask another question.

12 Secretary Carter, General Dunford -- they have all mentioned
13 -- we have talked about the Arctic in front of this
14 committee, how we are late to the game. You know, if you
15 look at the DOD's Arctic strategy, it is pretty much a joke.
16 It is 13 pages, 6 of which are pictures. It mentions
17 climate change five times and mentions Russia solely in a
18 footnote. So I think we provided proper oversight here and,
19 in a bipartisan way, move forward on requiring the Secretary
20 of Defense to put forward a no-kidding, real strategy and an
21 operations plan for the Arctic. We got a commitment from
22 Secretary Carter and General Dunford to make sure that is a
23 very robust OPLAN for the Arctic. Can I get your commitment
24 that we would have the EUCOM's participation in that as
25 well? I think it is going to be important.

1 General Breedlove: Absolutely, Senator. And as
2 importantly, NATO is beginning to take a look at this as
3 well.

4 Senator Sullivan: Great.

5 Let me ask more specific questions. You know, as
6 Russia is building up -- you have been in Alaska recently.
7 You are aware that our Department of Defense is looking at
8 building down in the Arctic, getting rid of the only
9 airborne brigade combat team in the Arctic, the Asia-Pacific,
10 the only mountain-trained Arctic BCT in the entire U.S.
11 military. That is the 425. You talked about a permanently
12 forward presence. You talked about rapid reinforcement
13 capability. This is a unit that you uniquely can do all of
14 those things and fight in the Arctic.

15 To his credit, General Milley is taking a look at this,
16 and he made some comments last week that he thinks that
17 maybe given the situation with regard to Russia, with regard
18 to Korea, that the Army should reverse this decision, what I
19 think is a strategically short-sighted decision. Admiral
20 Harris and General Scaparrotti last week were supportive of
21 that decision by General Milley to keep the 425.

22 Do you support that decision by General Milley? And
23 what do you think that that does to show Vladimir Putin
24 resolve, that hey, wait a minute, things have changed? They
25 are rapidly building up the Arctic. We have this ERI

1 initiative, but we also need forces out east. And the
2 easiest way to keep the American resolve is to just keep our
3 best Arctic warriors in place. Do you support what General
4 Milley is doing? How do you think Vladimir Putin would view
5 keeping that 425, which by the way, as you know, the
6 Russians watch them train all the time? They do an airborne
7 jump. The Russians do an airborne jump. They are very,
8 very aware of this unit and its capability. Can you comment
9 on those questions?

10 General Breedlove: Senator, I think it is important
11 that we keep this capability and that we maintain its
12 currency and continually address its capability to do its
13 mission.

14 I think Mr. Putin understands physics, and the physics
15 are that those forces in the north across the pole are as
16 close if not closer than many other forces we have in our
17 inventory. And so the speed and response of that set of
18 forces and capabilities are very important, and I think Mr.
19 Putin understands that.

20 Senator Sullivan: So do you support what General
21 Milley --

22 General Breedlove: We need to keep this capability,
23 sir.

24 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Chairman McCain: Senator Wicker?

2 Senator Wicker: Thank you very much.

3 And thank you, General.

4 I have been in and out, but let me ask you about -- let
5 me get back to Ukraine and then maybe touch on the refugee
6 crisis too.

7 We have got these frozen conflicts throughout the
8 region, Moldova, Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh. In your
9 judgment, is Ukraine now to be added to that list of frozen
10 conflicts or is the situation a little too kinetic there for
11 us to know?

12 General Breedlove: Sir, thank you, and please do not
13 take this as any sort of a disagreement. But I really do
14 not like the term "frozen conflicts."

15 Senator Wicker: But it is a term that is widely --

16 General Breedlove: Yes, sir, absolutely. And that is
17 where I was going. It is a term that is widely used, but I
18 would like to point out that most of these are still hot and
19 people are dying in some of these places. There are four or
20 five of them. Georgia, as I mentioned earlier -- the
21 Russians recently moved the line in South Ossetia another
22 1,600 meters to the south, and it took over a major energy
23 transmission point.

24 Senator Wicker: What were the casualties there?

25 General Breedlove: That was done bloodless. They

1 simply moved the line.

2 In Nagorno-Karabakh, we routinely have days where
3 soldiers are injured and occasionally killed there.

4 Transnistria. We have not seen any actual injuries,
5 sir, but we have seen the reinforcement, refitting, and
6 strengthening of that garrison in Transnistria.

7 South Ossetia, Abkhazia, still extant.

8 And now I believe that Ukraine is in a position where
9 the Russians would like to maintain the capability to
10 continue to put military pressure on Kiev via that conflict.
11 But it is anything but frozen. As I said, yesterday about
12 71 engagements in the last 24 hours in that area, and over
13 450 engagements in that area over the last week.

14 Senator Wicker: What term would you prefer that we
15 use?

16 General Breedlove: We are wrestling with that, sir.
17 And I think "frozen conflicts" is good because people
18 recognize it. I would just like to point out that they are
19 really anything but frozen. Some of them I would call
20 pretty hot.

21 Senator Wicker: In your professional military
22 judgment, is the current situation, as it stands in Ukraine,
23 helpful or harmful to Mr. Putin's long-term interests?

24 General Breedlove: Let me answer the easy question
25 first. The situation in Ukraine is absolutely unhelpful to

1 the people of Ukraine's long-term interests.

2 Senator Wicker: No question about it.

3 General Breedlove: In Kiev, there is no question about
4 that.

5 I think that Mr. Putin very much wants to have a hand
6 in the direction of Ukraine, a hand in being able to
7 regulate their desire to join the West, a desire to keep
8 pressure on the economic and political decisions of Kiev.

9 And so I think that his interests are to maintain enough
10 pressure and influence in the Donbass to be able to shape
11 that. So I think it is in his interest to be able to
12 pressure Kiev through the tool of the Donbass.

13 I am not sure that I am ready to answer whether it is
14 in his long-term interests as it relates to his own national
15 concerns. Is that the question you are asking, Senator?

16 Senator Wicker: Yes.

17 General Breedlove: Can I get back to you on that?

18 Senator Wicker: That would be great.

19 [The information follows:]

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1 Senator Wicker: As far as you have observed, is the
2 Ukrainian Government in Kiev working together?

3 General Breedlove: Sir, I have seen some very good
4 things and some challenges. I think that there is a great
5 commitment. I have sat down personally several times with
6 Mr. Poroshenko and with Mr. Yatsenyuk, and I do think both
7 of those individuals have the best interest of their nation
8 in the future. I think that there are some pretty tough
9 structural problems that they have had to address. And
10 frankly, I think their people expect a lot from them. As I
11 mentioned earlier in this testimony, I think that some of
12 the change they need to make is pretty hard to take when
13 they are on a front and militarily engaged. And so they
14 face some pretty tough challenges ahead.

15 Senator Wicker: Well, thank you very much.

16 Let me, Mr. Chairman, if I might, just ask the General
17 briefly with regard to the refugee situation. We had a
18 question I think from Senator Manchin when I was at the
19 hearing earlier about the possibility of infiltration, and
20 certainly that is a concern.

21 Would you comment as to the destabilizing effect in the
22 territory of our European allies of this influx of
23 immigrants and migrants passing through and the prospect for
24 that either increasing or being mitigated somehow?

25 General Breedlove: The destabilizing effects are

1 multifaceted. The easiest ones to speak to is as I have
2 described before and I have in my written testimony that I
3 believe there is criminality, terrorists, and foreign
4 fighters in those flows. And those all have their own form
5 of destabilizing effect, criminality in just moving of
6 humans and moving of drugs and other things, those kind of
7 people using the flows to do that, terrorists, who have ill-
8 intent in the West. And then just returning foreign
9 fighters who have skills and may not actually be returning
10 with any ill-intent, but when they get home and they have no
11 economic opportunity and others, what do they eventually do
12 with those skills? So there is a lot of destabilizing
13 effect of this criminality, terrorism, and returning foreign
14 fighters.

15 The other piece that is, I think, more widely
16 understood is just the destabilizing effect economically and
17 straining the social fabric of these nations as these large
18 flows of people challenge already challenged governments and
19 social systems as they arrive. And so I think there is a
20 multifaceted challenge to the nations of Europe.

21 Senator Wicker: Thank you very much.

22 And I appreciate the chair's indulgence.

23 Chairman McCain: Senator Sessions?

24 Senator Sessions: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 With regard to the European Union, someone wrote

1 recently that oddly you would think the European Commission,
2 Brussels, would be the one that would lead a unified effort
3 to deal with the migrant crisis. But in fact, in essence,
4 rightly or wrongly, legally or otherwise, they are the ones
5 that are blocking the nation states from taking action that
6 those states would normally take -- or attempting to block
7 them. Is that correct?

8 General Breedlove: Senator, being a military officer
9 and not a leader of one of these nations, I am not sure I am
10 really qualified to say that. But what I would say is
11 that --

12 Senator Sessions: The European rules -- and the
13 European Union is not making immediate decisions that would
14 facilitate a more effective control. Is that not correct?

15 General Breedlove: I believe, sir, that there could be
16 efforts made that could bring more unified pressure.

17 Senator Sessions: One of the things we all need, I
18 think, to understand here is just because we got a group of
19 nations together that pretend to be an effective leadership,
20 sometimes they undermine the ability of action to actually
21 occur that could be beneficial.

22 Is it still true that a high percentage of these
23 migrants are young males?

24 General Breedlove: I believe that to be true, Senator.

25 Senator Sessions: Well, let me take another subject.

1 Thank you for your great service -- you and your wife -- and
2 the commitment you have made to the country.

3 You have spent now almost 3 years in Europe. You had
4 time in Aviano and Ramstein and other places. So you know
5 the region well. Did the Europeans and NATO -- are they
6 willing to improve and increase their share of funding for
7 the defense of Europe? You have raised that a number of
8 times. Would you briefly tell us your latest communication
9 with the region about what they need to do and what
10 achievements have occurred in the last several years, not
11 promises for the future?

12 General Breedlove: So the numbers I have used today
13 once, Senator, are again not going to be perfect, but the
14 numbers that we see now in Europe follow the following line.
15 About 16 of our nations have stopped the decline in their
16 budgets, not perfect, but a first step.

17 Senator Sessions: Well, it is worse than not perfect.
18 I mean, they have been declining and they are below their
19 commitment of 2 percent, most of them. Are they not?

20 General Breedlove: Only five now, sir, are at 2
21 percent or better. And I would offer to you that I believe
22 there are about seven now that have a realistic plan to
23 attain 2 percent in a realistic amount of time. So, again,
24 not perfect numbers, but this is an improvement since Wales.
25 I do not want to overstate, but it is an improvement since

1 Wales.

2 Senator Sessions: Well, of course, we have a real
3 interest in Europe in that they be able be free and
4 independent and not be vulnerable to encroachment from the
5 Russians.

6 However, I mean, I have to ask the President's request
7 for \$3.4 billion in the European Reassurance Initiative --
8 how much of that has been matched by the Europeans? Do they
9 have any formal commitment to increase their spending for
10 similar projects?

11 General Breedlove: Sir, I cannot speak to individual
12 commitments at this time. What I have seen, not from the
13 \$3.4 billion, because it has not been delivered yet, but
14 thank you for the first 2 years of ERI. As you know, it was
15 about just under a billion the first year and about \$800
16 million the second year. The improvements that we have used
17 that to make in the forward nations to railheads, ports, and
18 airfields --

19 Senator Sessions: Well, let me just -- so my time
20 would not be eroded here. This is very troubling. So a
21 European delegation from the parliament group was here, and
22 I asked them to increase their spending, and the head of the
23 delegation responded quite frankly. He said, Senator, we
24 agree it is unacceptable that the United States pay 75
25 percent of the cost of NATO. So now we have this problem

1 that we need to have some more resources there, and we add
2 \$3.4 billion and these countries are not even putting in
3 their fair share.

4 I am wondering do they have a will to survive
5 themselves and/or have they just gotten in the habit of
6 expecting us to step up to the plate to fund their defense.
7 It is an unacceptable thing, as the parliamentarian said.

8 Would you have any final comments?

9 General Breedlove: Well, sir, on that we observed the
10 same thing over the last 20 years when the nations of Europe
11 were trying to treat Russia as a partner. They all took a
12 vector which was decreasing budgets. Again, I do not want
13 to overstate, but what we have seen since Wales is at least
14 a turning in the bow of the ship. It is not perfect yet.

15 Senator Sessions: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 Chairman McCain: Senator Sullivan has one additional
17 question.

18 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 General, I appreciate your focus on all instruments of
20 American power as part of our strategy. Last week, there
21 was a very good article, front page article, in "The Wall
22 Street Journal" on the importance of the beginning of LNG
23 shipments from the United States, because we are now, once
24 again, the world's energy super power in terms of oil and
25 gas production -- LNG shipments from the United States to

1 Europe, to some of the countries we have been talking about,
2 to some of the countries that are at risk of Russian energy
3 blackmail as part of their policies.

4 How important is that part of our national power as an
5 instrument for the longer-term strategy to thwart Russian
6 aggression and to provide a moral boost to some of these
7 countries over there that feel like they are under the boot
8 of the Russian energy policies? That certainly came out in
9 this article. I do not know if you had the opportunity to
10 read it.

11 General Breedlove: Senator, I am not sure I have read
12 that exact article, but the concept is absolutely
13 applicable, as we have discussed a little bit here today as
14 well.

15 Just like you stated, Russia uses every element, and
16 that economic element is both in the terms of pressure on
17 returning payments and calling in loans, et cetera. But a
18 huge part of that economic tool that is used is, as you
19 correctly state, fuels in all manners are used as a tool,
20 restrictions and pricing of those fuels. So anything that
21 we can do to broaden the capability of the nations to be
22 able to deal with that pressure I think is a good
23 possibility, a good process.

24 Senator Sessions: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 Chairman McCain: General, would it be of great concern

1 to us if Russia developed a capability to sever our
2 transatlantic cables?

3 General Breedlove: Yes, Senator, it would. Or excuse
4 me. Chairman, it would.

5 Chairman McCain: Thank you.

6 General, we really appreciate your appearances before
7 this committee, but most of all your outstanding leadership
8 and we look forward to seeing you again in the future. But
9 to me, you are the very best of what we expect of our
10 military leadership, and I thank you.

11 Jack?

12 Senator Reed: I simply want to second the chairman's
13 comments very sincerely and very appreciatively.

14 General Breedlove: Thank you, sir.

15 [Whereupon, at 12:00 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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